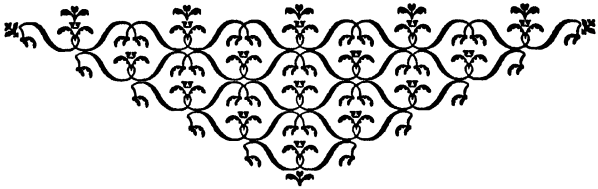

The Works of

EDGAR ALLAN POE

POETRY

Volume X

PUBLISHERS GUILD, INC.

TO

THE NOBLEST OF HER SEX—

THE AUTHOR OF

"THE DRAMA OF EXILE"—

TO

MISS ELIZABETH BARRETT BARRETT,

OF ENGLAND

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME

WITH THE MOST ENTHUSIASTIC ADMIRATION AND WITH THE MOST SINCERE ESTEEM

1845. E. A. P.

PREFACE.

THESE trifles are collected and republished chiefly with a view to their redemption from the many improvements to which they have been subjected while going at random the "rounds of the press." I am naturally anxious that what I have written should circulate as I wrote it, if it circulate at all. In defence of my own taste, nevertheless, it is incumbent upon me to say that I think nothing in this volume of much value to the public, or very creditable to myself. Events not to be controlled have prevented me from making, at any time, any serious effort in what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of my choice. With me poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion; and the passions should be held in reverence: they must not—they cannot at will be excited, with an eye to the paltry compensations, or the more paltry commendations, of mankind.

E. A. P.

1845.

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POETRY

THE RAVEN.

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping—rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain

Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping—tapping at my chamber door—
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door:——
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the darkness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore!"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul
within me burning,
Soon I heard again a tapping, somewhat louder
than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at
my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mys-
tery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment, and this mys-
tery explore;—
'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many
a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly
days of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not an instant
stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above
my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my
chamber door—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy
into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the counte-
nance it wore,
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,"
I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering
from the Nightly shore—

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's
Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear
discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little rele-
vancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living
human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his
chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above
his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid
bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word
he did outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered—not a feather
then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered, "Other
friends have flown before—
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my hopes
have flown before."
Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly
spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only
stock and store,

Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope the melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamplight gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthé from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthé, and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the
angels name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or
fiend!" I shricked, upstarting—
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's
Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy
soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust
above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy
form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting,
still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my
chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's
that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws
his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies
floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

Published 1845.

THE BELLS.

I.

Hear the sledges with the bells—
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars, that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!

From the molten golden-notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!

Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III.

Hear the loud alarum bells—
Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror now their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire

Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavour
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells—
Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamour and the clangour of the bells!

IV.

Hear the tolling of the bells—
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night,

How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—
They are Ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells—
Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,

As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

1849.

ULALUME.

THE skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crisped and sere—
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir—
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic,
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll—
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole—
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—
Our memories were treacherous and sere—
For we knew not the month was October,

And we marked not the night of the year—
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber—
(Though once we had journeyed down here)—
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn—
As the sun-dials hinted of morn—
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn—
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs—
She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies—
To the Lethean peace of the skies—
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes—
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust—

Her pallor I strangely mistrust:—
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings till they trailed in the dust—
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust—
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its Sibyllic splendour is beaming
With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—
See!—it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright—
We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom—
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of a vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb—
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister
On the door of this legended tomb?"

She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crisped and sere—
As the leaves that were withering and sere;
And I cried—"It was surely October
On *this* very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here—
That I brought a dread burden down here!
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber—
This misty mid region of Weir—
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,—
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

1847.

TO HELEN.

I SAW thee once—once only—years ago:
I must not say *how* many—but *not* many.
It was a July midnight; and from out
A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring,
Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,
There fell a silvery-silken veil of light,
With quietude, and sultriness and slumber,
Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,
Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe—
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses
That gave out, in return for the love-light,
Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death—
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses
That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted

By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.
Clad all in white, upon a violet bank
I saw thee half-reclining; while the moon
Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,
And on thine own, upturn'd—alas, in sorrow!

Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight—
Was it not Fate (whose name is also Sorrow),

That bade me pause before that garden-gate,
To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses?
No footstep stirred: the hated world all slept,
Save only thee and me—(O Heaven!—O God!
How my heart beats in coupling those two words!)—
Save only thee and me. I paused—I looked—
And in an instant all things disappeared.
(Ah, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!)
The pearly lustre of the moon went out:
The mossy banks and the meandering paths,
The happy flowers and the repining trees,
Were seen no more: the very roses' odours
Died in the arms of the adoring airs.
All—all expired save thee—save less than thou:
Save only the divine light in thine eyes—
Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes.
I saw but them—they were the world to me.
I saw but them—saw only them for hours—
Saw only them until the moon went down.
What wild heart-histories seemed to lie enwritten
Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres!
How dark a woe! yet how sublime a hope!
How silently serene a sea of pride!
How daring an ambition! yet how deep—
How fathomless a capacity for love!

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from sight,
Into a western couch of thunder-cloud;
And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing trees

Didst glide away. *Only thine eyes remained.*
They *would not* go—they never yet have gone.
Lighting my lonely pathway home that night,
They have not left me (as my hopes have) since.
They follow me—they lead me through the years.
They are my ministers—yet I their slave.
Their office is to illumine and enkindle—
My duty, *to be saved* by their bright light,
And purified in their electric fire,
And sanctified in their elysian fire.
They fill my soul with Beauty (which is Hope),
And are far up in Heaven—the stars I kneel to
In the sad, silent watches of my night;
While even in the meridian glare of day
I see them still—two sweetly scintillant
Venuses, unextinguished by the sun!

1848.

ANNABEL LEE.

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea:
But we loved with a love that was more than
love—
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me—

Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my ANNABEL LEE.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE.

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And the stars never rise but I see the bright eyes
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea—
In her tomb by the side of the sea.

1849.

A VALENTINE.

For her this rhyme is penned, whose luminous eyes,
Brightly expressive as the twins of Leda,
Shall find her own sweet name, that, nestling lies
Upon the page, enwrapped from every reader.
Search narrowly the lines!—they hold a treasure
Divine—a talisman—an amulet
That must be worn *at heart*. Search well the measure—
The words—the syllables! Do not forget
The trivialest point, or you may lose your labor!
And yet there is in this no Gordian knot
Which one might not undo without a sabre,
If one could merely comprehend the plot.
Enwritten upon the leaf where now are peering
Eyes scintillating soul, there lie *perdus*
Three eloquent words oft uttered in the hearing
Of poets by poets—as the name is a poet's, too.
Its letters, although naturally lying
Like the knight Pinto—Mendez Ferdinando—
Still for a synonym for Truth—Cease trying!
You will not read the riddle, though you do
the best you *can* do.

[To discover the names in this and the following poem, read the first letter of the first line in connection with the second letter of the second line, the third letter of the third line, the fourth, of the fourth and so on to the end.]

1846.

AN ENIGMA.

"Seldom we find," says Solomon Don Dunce,
"Half an idea in the profoundest sonnet.
Through all the flimsy things we see at once
As easily as through a Naples bonnet—
Trash of all trash!—how *can* a lady don it?
Yet heavier far than your Petrarchan stuff—
Owl-downy nonsense that the faintest puff
Twirls into trunk-paper the while you con it."
And, veritably, Sol is right enough.
The general tuckermanities are arrant
Bubbles—ephemeral and *so* transparent—
But *this* is, now—you may depend upon it—
Stable, opaque, immortal—all by dint
Of the dear names that lie concealed within't.

1847.

[See previous page.]

TO MY MOTHER.

BECAUSE I feel that, in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—
You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you,
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.
My mother—my own mother, who died early,
Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

1849.

[The above was addressed to the poet's mother-in-law, Mrs. Clemm.—ED.]

FOR ANNIE.

THANK Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know,
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length—
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly,
Now in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing

It heart:—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst,
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst:—
I have drank of a water
That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy
And narrow my bed—
For man never slept
In a different bed;

And, to *sleep,* you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalised spirit
Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
Regretting its roses—
Its old agitations
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
Lying, it fancies
A holier odour
About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odour,
Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
To keep me from harm—
To the queen of the angels
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
Now in my bed,
(Knowing her love)
That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
Now in my bed,
(With her love at my breast)
That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie—
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

1849.

TO F-

Beloved! amid the earnest woes
That crowd around my earthly path—
(Drear path, alas! where grows
Not even one lonely rose)—
My soul at least a solace hath
In dreams of thee, and therein knows
An Eden of bland repose.

And thus thy memory is to me
Like some enchanted far-off isle
In some tumultuous sea—
Some ocean throbbing far and free
With storm—but where meanwhile
Serenest skies continually
Just o'er that one bright island smile.

1845.

TO FRANCES S. OSGOOD.

THOU wouldst be loved?—then let thy heart
From its present pathway part not;
Being everything which now thou art,
Be nothing which thou art not.
So with the world thy gentle ways,
Thy grace, thy more than beauty,
Shall be an endless theme of praise,
And love a simple duty.

1845.

ELDORADO.

GAILY bedight,
A gallant knight
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,

Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

1849.

EULALIE.

I DWELT alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing bride—
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling bride.
Ah, less—less bright
The stars of the night
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!
And never a flake
That the vapour can make
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded curl—
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most humble and careless curl.
Now Doubt—now Pain
Come never again,
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,
And all day long
Shines, bright and strong,
Astarté within the sky,
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye—
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

1845.

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM.

TAKE this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow—
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream:
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less *gone?*
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is *all* that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

1849.

TO MARIE LOUISE (SHEW).

Of all who hail thy presence as the morning—
Of all to whom thine absence is the night—
The blotting utterly from out high heaven
The sacred sun—of all who, weeping, bless thee
Hourly for hope—for life—ah, above all,
For the resurrection of deep buried faith
In truth, in virtue, in humanity—
Of all who, on despair's unhallowed bed
Lying down to die, have suddenly arisen
At thy soft-murmured words, "Let there be light!"
At thy soft-murmured words that were fulfilled
In the seraphic glancing of thine eyes—
Of all who owe thee most, whose gratitude
Nearest resembles worship,—oh, remember
The truest, the most fervently devoted,
And think that these weak lines are written by him—
By him who, as he pens them, thrills to think
His spirit is communing with an angel's.

1847.

TO MARIE LOUISE (SHEW).

Not long ago, the writer of these lines,
In the mad pride of intellectuality,
Maintained "the power of words"—denied that ever
A thought arose within the human brain
Beyond the utterance of the human tongue:
And now, as if in mockery of that boast,
Two words—two foreign soft dissyllables—
Italian tones, made only to be murmured
By angels dreaming in the moonlit "dew
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill,"—
Have stirred from out the abysses of his heart,
Unthought-like thoughts that are the souls of thought,
Richer, far wider, far diviner visions
Than even the seraph harper, Israfel,
(Who has "the sweetest voice of all God's creatures,")
Could hope to utter. And I! my spells are broken.
The pen falls powerless from my shivering hand.
With thy dear name as text, though bidden by thee,
I cannot write—I cannot speak or think—

Alas, I cannot feel; for 'tis not feeling,
This standing motionless upon the golden
Threshold of the wide-open gate of dreams,
Gazing, entranced, adown the gorgeous vista,
And thrilling as I see, upon the right,
Upon the left, and all the way along,
Amid empurpled vapours, far away
To where the prospect terminates—*thee only!*

1848.

THE CITY IN THE SEA.

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and
the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy Heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently—
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.
Resignedly beneath the sky

The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye—
Not the gaily-jewelled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea—
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene.

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide—
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven.
The waves have now a redder glow—
The hours are breathing faint and low—
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

1845.

THE SLEEPER.

At midnight in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapour, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin moulders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All Beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
(Her casement open to the skies)
Irene, with her Destinies!

Oh, lady bright! can it be right—
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop—
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,

And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully—so fearfully—
Above the closed and fringed lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!
Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all-solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
For ever with unopened eye,
While the dim sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep;
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold—
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And winged panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls,
Of her grand family funerals—

Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood many an idle stone—
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within.

1845.

BRIDAL BALLAD.

THE ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well;
But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell—
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed *his* who fell
In the battle down the dell,
And who is happy now.

But he spoke to reassure me,
And he kissed my pallid brow,
While a reverie came o'er me,
And to the churchyard bore me,
And I sighed to him before me,
Thinking him dead D'Elormie,
"Oh, I am happy now!"

And thus the words were spoken,
And thus the plighted vow,

And, though my faith be broken,
And, though my heart be broken,
Behold the golden token
That *proves* me happy now!

Would to God I could awaken!
For I dream I know not how,
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,—
Lest the dead who is forsaken
May not be happy now.

1845.

NOTES.

1. "The Raven" was first published on the 29th January, 1845, in the New York *Evening Mirror*—a paper its author was then assistant editor of. It was prefaced by the following words, understood to have been written by N. P. Willis:—We are permitted to copy (in advance of publication) from the second number of the *American Review*, the following remarkable poem by Edgar Poe. In our opinion, it is the most effective single example of 'fugitive poetry' ever published in this country, and unsurpassed in English poetry for subtle conception, masterly ingenuity of versification, and consistent sustaining of imaginative lift and 'pokerishness.' It is one of those 'dainties bred in a book' which we feed on. It will stick to the memory of everybody who reads it." In the February number of the *American Review* the poem was published as by "Quarles," and it was introduced by the following note, evidently suggested if not written by Poe himself.

["The following lines from a correspondent—besides the deep, quaint strain of the sentiment, and the curious introduction of some ludicrous touches amidst the serious and impressive, as was doubtless intended by the author—appears to us one of the most felicitous specimens of unique rhyming which has for some time met our eye. The resources of English rhythm for varieties of melody, measure, and sound, producing corresponding diversities of effect, having been thoroughly studied, much more perceived, by very few poets in the language. While the classic tongues, especially the Greek, possess, by power of accent, several advantages for versification over our own, chiefly through greater abundance of spondaic feet we have other and very great advantages of sound by the modern usage of rhyme. Alliteration is nearly the only effect of that kind which the ancients had in common with us. It will be seen that much of the melody of 'The Raven' arises from alliteration, and the studious use of similar sounds in unusual places. In regard to its measure, it may be noted that if all the verses were like the second, they might properly be placed merely in short lines, producing a not uncommon form; but the presence in all the others of one line—mostly the second in the verse" (stanza ?)—"which flows continuously, with only an aspirate pause in the middle, like that before the short line in the Sapphic Adonic, while the fifth has at the middle pause no similarity of sound with any part besides, gives the versification an entirely different effect. We could wish the capacities of our noble language in prosody were better understood." —ED. *Am. Rev.*]

2. The bibliographical history of "The Bells" is curious. The subject, and some lines of the original version, having been suggested by the poet's friend, Mrs. Shew, Poe, when he wrote out the first draft of the poem, headed it, "The Bells, By Mrs. M. A. Shew." This draft, now the editor's property, consists of only seventeen lines, and reads thus:—

I.

The bells!—ah, the bells!
The little silver bells!
How fairy-like a melody there floats
From their throats—
From their merry little throats—
From the silver, tinkling throats
Of the bells, bells, bells—
Of the bells!

II.

The bells!—ah, the bells!
The heavy iron bells!
How horrible a monody there floats
From their throats—
From their deep-toned throats—
From their melancholy throats!
How I shudder at the notes
Of the bells, bells, bells—
Of the bells!

In the autumn of 1848 Poe added another line to this poem, and sent it to the editor of the *Union Magazine*. It was not published. So, in the following February, the poet forwarded to the same periodical a much enlarged and altered transcript. Three months having elapsed without publication, another revision of the poem, similar to the current version, was sent, and in the following October was published in the *Union Magazine*.

3. This poem was first published in Colton's *American Review* for December, 1847, as "To —— —— Ulalume: a Ballad." Being reprinted immediately in the *Home Journal*, it was copied into various publications with the name of the editor, N. P. Willis, appended, and was ascribed to him. When first published, it contained the following additional stanza which Poe subsequently, at the suggestion of Mrs. Whitman, wisely suppressed:—

Said we then—the two, then—"Ah, can it
Have been that the woodlandish ghouls—
The pitiful, the merciful ghouls—
To bar up our path and to ban it
From the secret that lies in these wolds—
Had drawn up the spectre of a planet
From the limbo of lunary souls—
This sinfully scintillant planet
From the Hell of the planetary souls?"

4. "To Helen" (Mrs. S. Helen Whitman) was not published until November, 1848, although written several months earlier. It first appeared in the *Union Magazine*, and with the omission,

contrary to the knowledge or desire of Poe, of the line, "Oh, God! oh, Heaven—how my heart beats in coupling those two words."

5. "Annabel Lee" was written early in 1849, and is evidently an expression of the poet's undying love for his deceased bride, although at least one of his lady admirers deemed it a response to her admiration. Poe sent a copy of the ballad to the *Union Magazine*, in which publication it appeared in January, 1850, three months after the author's death. Whilst suffering from "hope deferred" as to its fate, Poe presented a copy of "Annabel Lee" to the editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, who published it in the November number of his periodical, a month after Poe's death. In the meantime the poet's own copy, left among his papers, passed into the hands of the person engaged to edit his works, and he quoted the poem in an obituary of Poe, in the New York *Tribune*, before any one else had an opportunity of publishing it.

6. "A Valentine," one of three poems addressed to Mrs. Osgood, appears to have been written early in 1846.

7. "An Enigma," addressed to Mrs. Sarah Anna Lewis ("Stella"), was sent to that lady in a letter, in November, 1847, and the following March appeared in Sartain's *Union Magazine*.

8. The sonnet, "To My Mother" (Maria Clemm), was sent for publication to the short-lived *Flag of our Union*, early in 1849, but does not appear to have been issued until after its author's death, when it appeared in the *Leaflets of Memory* for 1850.

9. "For Annie" was first published in the *Flag of our Union*, in the spring of 1849. Poe, annoyed at some misprints in this issue, shortly afterwards caused a corrected copy to be inserted in the *Home Journal*.

10. "To F——" (Frances Sargeant Osgood) appeared in the *Broadway Journal* for April, 1845. These lines are but slightly varied from those inscribed "To Mary," in the *Southern Literary Messenger* for July, 1835, and subsequently republished, with the two stanzas transposed, in *Graham's Magazine* for March, 1842, as "To One Departed."

11. "To F—s S. O—d," a portion of the poet's triune tribute to Mrs. Osgood, was published in the *Broadway Journal* for September, 1845. The earliest version of these lines appeared in the *Southern Literary Messenger* for September, 1835, as "Lines written in an Album," and was addressed to Eliza White, the proprietor's daughter. Slightly revised, the poem reappeared in Burton's *Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1839, as "To ——."

12. Although "Eldorado" was published during Poe's lifetime, in 1849, in the *Flag of our Union*, it does not appear to have ever received the author's finishing touches.

POEMS OF MANHOOD.

LENORE.

Ah, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown
for ever!
Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the
Stygian river.
And, Guy de Vere, hast *thou* no tear?—weep
now or never more!
See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy
love, Lenore!
Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral
song be sung!—
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever
died so young—
A dirge for her, the doubly dead in that she
died so young.

"Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and
hated her for her pride,
And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed
her—that she died!
How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?—the
requiem how be sung
By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the
slanderous tongue

That did to death the innocence that died, and
died so young?"

Peccavimus; but rave not thus! and let a Sab-
bath song
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no
wrong!
The sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with
Hope, that flew beside,
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should
have been thy bride—
For her, the fair and *débonnaire,* that now so
lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair but not within
her eyes—
The life still there, upon her hair—the death
upon her eyes.

"Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge
will I upraise,
But waft the angel on her flight with a pæan
of old days!
Let *no* bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its
hallowed mirth,
Should catch the note, as it doth float up from
the damned Earth.
To friends above, from fiends below, the indig-
nant ghost is riven—
From Hell unto a high estate far up within the
Heaven—
From grief and groan to a golden throne beside
the King of Heaven."

TO ONE IN PARADISE.

THOU wast that all to me, love,
  For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
  A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
  And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
  Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise
But to be overcast!
  A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
  (Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
  The light of Life is o'er!
"No more—no more—no more"—
(Such language holds the solemn sea
  To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
  Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,
  And all my nightly dreams

Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams!
Alas! for that accursed time
They bore thee o'er the billow,
From love to titled age and crime,
And an unholy pillow!—
From me, and from our misty clime,
Where weeps the silver willow!

1835.

THE COLISEUM.

TYPE of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst,
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie,)
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle!

Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,
Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the horned moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!
But stay! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—
These mouldering plinths—these sad and blackened shafts—
These vague entablatures — this crumbling frieze—
These shattered cornices — this wreck — this ruin—
These stones—alas! these grey stones—are they all—
All of the famed, and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?
"Not all"—the Echoes answer me—"not all!
"Prophetic sounds and loud, arise for ever
"From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
"As melody from Memnon to the Sun.
"We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
"With a despotic sway all giant minds.
"We are not impotent—we pallid stones.
"Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—
"Not all the magic of our high renown—
"Not all the wonder that encircles us—
"Not all the mysteries that in us lie—
"Not all the memories that hang upon
"And cling around about us as a garment,
"Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."

1833.

THE HAUNTED PALACE.

In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion—
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago),
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A winged odour went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,
Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tunëd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
To a discordant melody,
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out for ever
And laugh—but smile no more.

1838.

THE CONQUEROR WORM.

Lo! 'tis a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
Invisible Wo!
That motley drama—oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore,
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And the angels sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.
Out—out are the lights—out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
And the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its Hero the Conqueror Worm.

1838.

SILENCE.

THERE are some qualities—some incorporate things,
That have a double life, which thus is made
A type of that twin entity which springs
From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.
There is a two-fold *Silence*—sea and shore—
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,
Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces,
Some human memories and tearful lore,
Render him terrorless: his name's "No More."
He is the corporate Silence: dread him not!
No power hath he of evil in himself;
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!)
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod
No foot of man), commend thyself to God!

1840.

DREAMLAND.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolom, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule—
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of SPACE—out of TIME.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the dews that drip all over;
Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
Their lone waters—lone and dead,
Their still waters—still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily..

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily,—
By the mountains—near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—
By the grey woods,—by the swamp

Where the toad and the newt encamp,—
By the dismal tarns and pools
Where dwell the Ghouls,—
By each spot the most unholy—
In each nook most melancholy,—
There the traveller meets aghast
Sheeted Memories of the Past—
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by—
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region—
For the spirit that walks in shadow
'Tis—oh, 'tis an Eldorado!
But the traveller, travelling through it,
May not—dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.

1844.

TO ZANTE.

FAIR isle, that from the fairest of all flowers,
  Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take!
How many memories of what radiant hours
  At sight of thee and thine at once awake!
How many scenes of what departed bliss!
  How many thoughts of what entombed hopes!
How many visions of a maiden that is
  No more—no more upon thy verdant slopes!
No more! alas, that magical sad sound
  Transforming all! Thy charms shall please
    no more—
Thy memory *no more!* Accursed ground
  Henceforward I hold thy flower-enamelled
    shore,
O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante!
  "Isola d'oro! Fior di Levante!"

1837.

HYMN.

At morn—at noon—at twilight dim—
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn!
In joy and wo—in good and ill—
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the Hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;
Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!

1835.

SCENES FROM "POLITIAN."

AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA.

I.

ROME.—A Hall in a Palace. ALESSANDRA and CASTIGLIONE.

Alessandra. Thou art sad, Castiglione.
Castiglione. Sad!—not I.
Oh, I'm the happiest, happiest man in Rome!
A few days more, thou knowest, my Alessandra,
Will make thee mine. Oh, I am very happy!
Aless. Methinks thou hast a singular way of showing
Thy happiness—what ails thee, cousin of mine?
Why didst thou sigh so deeply?
Cas. Did I sigh?
I was not conscious of it. It is a fashion,
A silly—a most silly fashion I have
When I am *very* happy. Did I sigh?
(*sighing.*)
Aless. Thou didst. Thou art not well
Thou hast indulged
Too much of late, and I am vexed to see it.
Late hours and wine, Castiglione,—these
Will ruin thee! thou art already altered—
Thy looks are haggard—nothing so wears away
The constitution as late hours and wine.

Cas. (*musing*). Nothing, fair cousin, nothing—not even deep sorrow—
Wears it away like evil hours and wine.
I will amend.
Aless. Do it! I would have thee drop
Thy riotous company, too—fellows low born
Ill suit the like of old Di Broglio's heir
And Alessandra's husband.
Cas. I will drop them.
Aless. Thou wilt—thou must. Attend thou also more
To thy dress and equipage—they are over plain
For thy lofty rank and fashion—much depends
Upon appearances.
Cas. I'll see to it.
Aless. Then see to it!—pay more attention, sir,
To a becoming carriage—much thou wantest
In dignity.
Cas. Much, much, oh, much I want
In proper dignity.
Aless. (*haughtily*). Thou mockest me, sir!
Cas. (*abstractedly*). Sweet, gentle Lalage!
Aless. Heard I aright?
I speak to him—he speaks of Lalage!
Sir Count! (*places her hand on his shoulder*) what art thou dreaming? He's not well!
What ails thee, sir?
Cas. (*starting*). Cousin! fair cousin!—madam!
I crave thy pardon—indeed I am not well—
Your hand from off my shoulder, if you please.

This air is most oppressive!—Madam—the Duke!

Enter Di Broglio.

Di Broglio. My son, I've news for thee!—hey?—what's the matter? (*observing Alessandra*).
I' the pouts? Kiss her, Castiglione! kiss her,
You dog! and make it up, I say, this minute!
I've news for you both. Politian is expected
Hourly in Rome—Politian, Earl of Leicester!
We'll have him at the wedding. 'Tis his first visit
To the imperial city.
Aless. What! Politian
Of Britain, Earl of Leicester?
Di Brog. The same, my love.
We'll have him at the wedding. A man quite young
In years, but grey in fame. I have not seen him,
But Rumour speaks of him as of a prodigy
Pre-eminent in arts, and arms, and wealth,
And high descent. We'll have him at the wedding.
Aless. I have heard much of this Politian.
Gay, volatile and giddy—is he not,
And little given to thinking?
Di Brog. Far from it, love.
No branch, they say, of all philosophy
So deep abstruse he has not mastered it.
Learned as few are learned.

Aless. 'Tis very strange!
I have known men have seen Politian
And sought his company. They speak of him
As of one who entered madly into life,
Drinking the cup of pleasure to the dregs.
Cas. Ridiculous! Now *I* have seen Politian
And know him well—nor learned nor mirthful he.
He is a dreamer, and a man shut out
From common passions.
Di Brog. Children, we disagree.
Let us go forth and taste the fragrant air
Of the garden. Did I dream, or did I hear
Politian was a *melancholy* man? (*Exeunt.*)

II.

ROME.—A Lady's Apartment, with a window open and looking into a garden. LALAGE, in deep mourning, reading at a table on which lie some books and a hand-mirror. In the background JACINTA (a servant maid) leans carelessly upon a chair.

Lalage. Jacinta! is it thou?
Jacinta (*pertly*). Yes, ma'am, I'm here.
Lal. I did not know, Jacinta, you were in waiting.
Sit down!—let not my presence trouble you—
Sit down!—for I am humble, most humble.
Jac. (*aside*). 'Tis time.
(*Jacinta seats herself in a side-long manner upon the chair, resting her elbows upon the back, and regarding her mistress with a contemptuous look. Lalage continues to read.*)

Lal. "It in another climate, so he said,
"Bore a bright golden flower, but not i' this soil!"
(*pauses—turns over some leaves, and resumes.*)
"No lingering winters there, nor snow, nor shower—
"But Ocean ever to refresh mankind
"Breathes the shrill spirit of the western wind."
Oh, beautiful!—most beautiful!—how like
To what my fevered soul doth dream of Heaven!
O happy land! (*pauses*) She died!—the maiden died!
O still more happy maiden who couldst die!
Jacinta!
(*Jacinta returns no answer, and Lalage presently resumes.*)
Again!—a similar tale
Told of a beauteous dame beyond the sea!
Thus speaketh one Ferdinand in the words of the play—
"She died full young"—one Bossola answers him—
"I think not so—her infelicity
"Seemed to have years too many"—Ah, luckless lady!
Jacinta! (*still no answer*).
Here's a far sterner story—
But like—oh, like in its despair—
Of that Egyptian queen, winning so easily

A thousand hearts—losing at length her own.
She died. Thus endeth the history—and her maids
Lean over her and weep—two gentle maids
With gentle names—Eiros and Charmion!
Rainbow and Dove!—Jacinta!

Jac. (*pettishly*). Madam, what *is* it?

Lal. Wilt thou, my good Jacinta, be so kind
As go down in the library and bring me
The Holy Evangelists?

Jac. Pshaw! (*Exit.*)

Lal. If there be balm
For the wounded spirit in Gilead, it is there!
Dew in the night time of my bitter trouble
Will there be found—"dew sweeter far than that
Which hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill."

(*re-enter Jacinta, and throws a volume on the table.*)

There, ma'am, 's the book. Indeed she is very troublesome. (*aside.*)

Lal. (*astonished*). What didst thou say, Jacinta?
Have I done aught
To grieve thee or to vex thee?—I am sorry.
For thou hast served me long and ever been
Trustworthy and respectful. (*resumes her reading.*)

Jac. I can't believe
She has any more jewels—no—no—she gave me all. (*aside.*)

Lal. What didst thou say, Jacinta? Now I bethink me
Thou hast not spoken lately of thy wedding.
How fares good Ugo?—and when is it to be?
Can I do aught?—is there no further aid
Thou needest, Jacinta?

Jac. Is there no *further* aid!
That's meant for me. (*aside.*) I'm sure, madam, you need not
Be always throwing those jewels in my teeth.

Lal. Jewels! Jacinta,—now indeed, Jacinta,
I thought not of the jewels.

Jac. Oh, perhaps not!
But then I might have sworn it. After all,
There's Ugo says the ring is only paste,
For he's sure the Count Castiglione never
Would have given a real diamond to such as you;
And at the best I'm certain, madam, you cannot
Have use for jewels *now*. But I might have sworn it. (*Exit.*)

(*Lalage bursts into tears and leans her head upon the table—after a short pause raises it.*)

Lal. Poor Lalage!—and is it come to this?
Thy servant maid!—but courage!—'tis but a viper
Whom thou hast cherished to sting thee to the soul! (*taking up the mirror.*)
Ha! here at least's a friend—too much a friend
In earlier days—a friend will not deceive thee.

Fair mirror and true! now tell me (for thou canst)
A tale—a pretty tale—and heed thou not
Though it be rife with woe. It answers me.
It speaks of sunken eyes, and wasted cheeks,
And Beauty long deceased—remembers me.
Of Joy departed—Hope, the Seraph Hope,
Inurnéd and entombed!—now, in a tone
Low, sad, and solemn, but most audible,
Whispers of early grave untimely yawning
For ruined maid. Fair mirror and true!—thou liest not!
Thou hast no end to gain—no heart to break—
Castiglione lied who said he loved——
Thou true—he false!—false!—false!

(*While she speaks, a monk enters her apartment and approaches unobserved.*)

Monk. Refuge thou hast,
Sweet daughter! in Heaven. Think of eternal things!
Give up thy soul to penitence, and pray!

Lal. (*arising hurriedly*). I *cannot* pray!—My soul is at war with God!
The frightful sounds of merriment below
Disturb my senses—go! I cannot pray—
The sweet airs from the garden worry me!
Thy presence grieves me—go!—thy priestly raiment
Fills me with dread—thy ebony crucifix
With horror and awe!

Monk. Think of thy precious soul!

Lal. Think of my early days!—think of my father
And mother in Heaven! think of our quiet home,
And the rivulet that ran before the door!
Think of my little sisters!—think of them!
And think of me!—think of my trusting love
And confidence—his vows—my ruin—think—think
Of my unspeakable misery!—begone!
Yet stay! yet stay!—what was it thou saidst of prayer
And penitence? Didst thou not speak of faith
And vows before the throne?

Monk. I did.

Lal. 'Tis well.
There *is* a vow 'twere fitting should be made—
A sacred vow, imperative and urgent,
A solemn vow!

Monk. Daughter, this zeal is well!

Lal. Father, this zeal is anything but well!
Hast thou a crucifix fit for this thing?
A crucifix whereon to register
This sacred vow? (*he hands her his own.*)
Not that—Oh! no!—no!—no! (*shuddering.*)
Not that! Not that!—I tell thee, holy man,
Thy raiments and thy ebony cross affright me!
Stand back! I have a crucifix myself,—
I have a crucifix! Methinks 'twere fitting
The deed—the vow—the symbol of the deed—
And the deed's register should tally, father!

(*draws a cross-handled dagger and raises it on high.*)
Behold the cross wherewith a vow like mine
Is written in Heaven!
Monk. Thy words are madness, daughter,
And speak a purpose unholy—thy lips are livid—
Thine eyes are wild—tempt not the wrath divine!
Pause ere too late!—oh, be not—be not rash!
Swear not the oath—oh, swear it not!
Lal. 'Tis sworn!

III.

An Apartment in a Palace. POLITIAN and BALDAZZAR.

Baldazzar. Arouse thee now, Politian!
Thou must not—nay indeed, indeed, thou shalt not
Give way unto these humours. Be thyself!
Shake off the idle fancies that beset thee,
And live, for now thou diest!
Politian. Not so, Baldazzar!
Surely I live.
Bal. Politian, it doth grieve me
To see thee thus!
Pol. Baldazzar, it doth grieve me
To give thee cause for grief, my honoured friend.
Command me, sir! what wouldst thou have me do?
At thy behest I will shake off that nature
Which from my forefathers I did inherit,

Which with my mother's milk I did imbibe,
And be no more Politian, but some other.
Command me, sir!
Bal. To the field then—to the field—
To the senate or the field.
Pol. Alas! alas!
There is an imp would follow me even there!
There is an imp *hath* followed me even there!
There is——what voice was that?
Bal. I heard it not.
I heard not any voice except thine own,
And the echo of thine own.
Pol. Then I but dreamed.
Bal. Give not thy soul to dreams: the camp
—the court
Befit thee—Fame awaits thee—Glory calls—
And her the trumpet-tongued thou wilt not hear
In hearkening to imaginary sounds
And phantom voices.
Pol. It *is* a phantom voice!
Didst thou not hear it *then?*
Bal. I heard it not.
Pol. Thou heardst it not!——Baldazzar,
speak no more
To me, Politian, of thy camps and courts.
Oh! I am sick, sick, sick, even unto death,
Of the hollow and high-sounding vanities
Of the populous Earth! Bear with me yet
awhile!
We have been boys together—school-fellows—
And now are friends—yet shall not be so long—
For in the Eternal City thou shalt do me

A kind and gentle office, and a Power—
A Power august, benignant, and supreme—
Shall then absolve thee of all further duties
Unto thy friend.
Bal. Thou speakest a fearful riddle
I *will* not understand.
Pol. Yet now as Fate
Approaches, and the Hours are breathing low,
The sands of Time are changed to golden grains,
And dazzle me, Baldazzar. Alas! alas!
I *cannot* die, having within my heart
So keen a relish for the beautiful
As hath been kindled within it. Methinks the air
Is balmier now than it was wont to be—
Rich melodies are floating in the winds—
A rarer loveliness bedecks the earth—
And with a holier lustre the quiet moon
Sitteth in Heaven.—Hist! hist! thou canst not say
Thou hearest not *now,* Baldazzar?
Bal. Indeed I hear not.
Pol. Not hear it!—listen now—listen!—the faintest sound
And yet the sweetest that ear ever heard!
A lady's voice!—and sorrow in the tone!
Baldazzar, it oppresses me like a spell!
Again!—again!—how solemnly it falls
Into my heart of hearts! that eloquent voice
Surely I never heard—yet it were well

Had I *but* heard it with its thrilling tones
In earlier days!

Bal. I myself hear it now.
Be still!—the voice, if I mistake not greatly,
Proceeds from yonder lattice—which you may see
Very plainly through the window—it belongs,
Does it not? unto this palace of the Duke.
The singer is undoubtedly beneath
The roof of his Excellency—and perhaps
Is even that Alessandra of whom he spoke
As the betrothed of Castiglione,
His son and heir.

Pol. Be still!—it comes again!

Voice (*very faintly*). And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus,
That have loved thee so long,
In wealth and woe among?
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!"[1]

Bal. The song is English, and I oft have heard it
In merry England—never so plaintively—
Hist! hist! it comes again!

Voice (*more loudly*). "Is it so strong
As for to leave me thus,
That have loved thee so long,
In wealth and woe among?
And is thy heart so strong

[1] By Sir Thomas Wyatt.—Ed.

As for to leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!"

Bal. 'Tis hushed and all is still!

Pol. All *is not* still.

Bal. Let us go down.

Pol. Go down, Baldazzar, go!

Bal. The hour is growing late—the Duke awaits us,—
Thy presence is expected in the hall
Below. What ails thee, Earl Politian?

Voice (*distinctly*). "Who have loved thee so long,
In wealth and woe among,
And is thy heart so strong?
Say nay! say nay!"

Bal. Let us descend!—'tis time. Politian, give
These fancies to the wind. Remember, pray,
Your bearing lately savoured much of rudeness
Unto the Duke. Arouse thee! and remember!

Pol. Remember? I do. Lead on! I *do* remember (*going.*)
Let us descend. Believe me I would give,
Freely would give the broad lands of my earldom
To look upon the face hidden by yon lattice—
"To gaze upon that veiled face, and hear
Once more that silent tongue."

Bal. Let me beg you, sir,
Descend with me—the Duke may be offended.
Let us go down, I pray you.

Voice (*loudly*). *Say nay!—say nay!*

Pol. (*aside*). 'Tis strange!—'tis very
strange—methought the voice
Chimed in with my desires and bade me stay!
(*Approaching the window.*)
Sweet voice! I heed thee, and will surely stay.
Now be this Fancy, by Heaven, or be it Fate,
Still will I not descend. Baldazzar, make
Apology unto the Duke for me;
I go not down to-night.
Bal. Your lordship's pleasure
Shall be attended to. Good-night, Politian.
Pol. Good-night, my friend, good-night.

IV.

The Gardens of a Palace—Moonlight. LALAGE and POLITIAN.

Lalage. And dost thou speak of love
To *me*, Politian?—dost thou speak of love
To Lalage?—ah woe—ah woe is me!
This mockery is most cruel—most cruel indeed!
Politian. Weep not! oh, sob not thus!—thy
bitter tears
Will madden me. Oh, mourn not, Lalage—
Be comforted! I know—I know it all,
And *still* I speak of love. Look at me, brightest,
And beautiful Lalage!—turn here thine eyes!
Thou askest me if I could speak of love,
Knowing what I know, and seeing what I have
seen.
Thou askest me that—and thus I answer thee—
Thus on my bended knee I answer thee.
(*kneeling.*)

Sweet Lalage, *I love thee—love thee—love thee;*
Thro' good and ill—thro' weal and woe, *I love thee.*
Not mother, with her first-born on her knee,
Thrills with intenser love than I for thee.
Not on God's altar, in any time or clime,
Burned there a holier fire than burneth now
Within my spirit for *thee.* And do I love?
(*arising.*)
Even for thy woes I love thee—even for thy woes—
Thy beauty and thy woes.
Lal. Alas, proud Earl,
Thou dost forget thyself, remembering me!
How, in thy father's halls, among the maidens
Pure and reproachless, of thy princely line,
Could the dishonoured Lalage abide?
Thy wife, and with a tainted memory—
My seared and blighted name, how would it tally
With the ancestral honours of thy house,
And with thy glory?
Pol. Speak not to me of glory!
I hate—I loathe the name; I do abhor
The unsatisfactory and ideal thing.
Art thou not Lalage, and I Politian?
Do I not love—art thou not beautiful—
What need we more? Ha! glory! now speak not of it:
By all I hold most sacred and most solemn—
By all my wishes now—my fears hereafter—
By all I scorn on earth and hope in heaven—

There is no deed I would more glory in,
Than in thy cause to scoff at this same glory
And trample it under foot. What matters it—
What matters it, my fairest, and my best,
That we go down unhonoured and forgotten
Into the dust—so we descend together?
Descend together—and then—and then perchance—

Lal. Why dost thou pause, Politian?

Pol. And then perchance
Arise together, Lalage, and roam
The starry and quiet dwellings of the blest,
And still—

Lal. Why dost thou pause, Politian?

Pol. And still *together—together.*

Lal. Now, Earl of Leicester!
Thou *lovest* me, and in my heart of hearts
I feel thou lovest me truly.

Pol. O Lalage!
(*throwing himself upon his knee.*)
And lovest thou *me?*

Lal. Hist! hush! within the gloom
Of yonder trees methought a figure passed—
A spectral figure, solemn, and slow, and noiseless—
Like the grim shadow Conscience, solemn and noiseless.
(*walks across and returns.*)
I was mistaken—'twas but a giant bough
Stirred by the autumn wind. Politian!

Pol. My Lalage—my love! why art thou moved?

Why dost thou turn so pale? Not Conscience' self,
Far less a shadow which thou likenest to it,
Should shake the firm spirit thus. But the night wind
Is chilly—and these melancholy boughs
Throw over all things a gloom.
Lal. Politian!
Thou speakest to me of love. Knowest thou the land
With which all tongues are busy—a land new found—
Miraculously found by one Genoa—
A thousand leagues within the golden west?
A fairy land of flowers, and fruit, and sunshine,—
And crystal lakes, and over-arching forests,
And mountains, around whose towering summits the winds
Of Heaven untrammelled flow—which air to breathe
Is Happiness now, and will be Freedom hereafter
In days that are to come?
Pol. Oh, wilt thou—wilt thou
Fly to that Paradise—my Lalage, wilt thou
Fly thither with me? There Care shall be forgotten,
And Sorrow shall be no more, and Eros be all.
And life shall then be mine, for I will live
For thee, and in thine eyes—and thou shalt be
No more a mourner—but the radiant Joys

Shall wait upon thee, and the angel Hope
Attend thee ever; and I will kneel to thee
And worship thee, and call thee my beloved,
My own, my beautiful, my love, my wife,
My all;—oh, wilt thou—wilt thou, Lalage,
Fly thither with me?

Lal. A deed is to be done—
Castiglione lives!

Pol. And he shall die! (*Exit.*)

Lal. (*after .a .pause*). And—he—shall—die!——alas!
Castiglione die? Who spoke the words?
Where am I?—what was it he said?—Politian!
Thou *art* not gone—thou art not gone, Politian!
I *feel* thou art not gone—yet dare not look,
Lest I behold thee not—thou *couldst* not go
With those words upon thy lips—oh, speak to me!
And let me hear thy voice—one word—one word,
To say thou art not gone,—one little sentence,
To say how thou dost scorn—how thou dost hate
My womanly weakness. Ha! ha! thou *art* not gone—
Oh, speak to me! I *knew* thou wouldst not go!
I knew thou wouldst not, couldst not, *durst* not go.
Villain, thou *art* not gone—thou mockest me!
And thus I clutch thee—thus!——He is gone, he is gone—
Gone—gone. Where am I?——'tis well—'tis very well!

So that the blade be keen—the blow be sure,
'Tis well, 'tis *very* well—alas! alas!

V.

The Suburbs. POLITIAN alone.

Politian. This weakness grows upon me. I am faint,
And much I fear me ill—it will not do
To die ere I have lived!—Stay—stay thy hand,
O Azrael, yet awhile!—Prince of the Powers
Of Darkness and the Tomb, oh, pity me!
Oh, pity me! let me not perish now,
In the budding of my Paradisal Hope!
Give me to live yet—yet a little while:
'Tis I who pray for life—I who so late
Demanded but to die!—What sayest the Count?

Enter Baldazzar.

Baldazzar. That, knowing no cause of quarrel or of feud
Between the Earl Politian and himself,
He doth decline your cartel.

Pol. *What* didst thou say?
What answer was it you brought me, good Baldazzar?
With what excessive fragrance the zephyr comes
Laden from yonder bowers!—a fairer day,
Or one more worthy Italy, methinks
No mortal eyes have seen!—*what* said the Count?

Bal. That he, Castiglione, not being aware

Of any feud existing, or any cause
Of quarrel between your lordship and himself,
Cannot accept the challenge.
Pol. It is most true—
All this is very true. When saw you, sir,
When saw you now, Baldazzar, in the frigid
Ungenital Britain which we left so lately,
A heaven so calm as this—so utterly free
From the evil taint of clouds?—and he did *say?*
Bal. No more, my lord, than I have told you:
The Count Castiglione will not fight,
Having no cause for quarrel.
Pol. Now this is true—
All very true. Thou art my friend, Baldazzar,
And I have not forgotten it—thou'lt do me
A piece of service; wilt thou go back and say
Unto this man, that I, the Earl of Leicester,
Hold him a villain?—thus much, I pr'ythee, say
Unto the Count—it is exceeding just
He should have cause for quarrel.
Bal. My lord!—my friend!——
Pol. (*aside*). 'Tis he—he comes himself!
(*aloud.*) Thou reasonest well.
I know what thou wouldst say—not send the message—
Well!—I will think of it—I will not send it.
Now pr'ythee, leave me—hither doth come a person
With whom affairs of a most private nature

I would adjust.
Bal. I go—to-morrow we meet,
Do we not?—at the Vatican.
Pol. At the Vatican. (*Exit Bal.*)

Enter Castiglione.

Cas. The Earl of Leicester here!
Pol. I *am* the Earl of Leicester, and thou seest,
Dost thou not, that I am here?
Cas. My lord, some strange,
Some singular mistake—misunderstanding—
Hath without doubt arisen: thou hast been urged
Thereby, in heat of anger, to address
Some words most unaccountable, in writing,
To me, Castiglione; the bearer being
Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. I am aware
Of nothing which might warrant thee in this thing,
Having given thee no offence. Ha!—am I right?
'Twas a mistake?—undoubtedly—we all
Do err at times.
Pol. Draw, villain, and prate no more!
Cas. Ha!—draw?—and villain? have at thee then at once,
Proud Earl! (*draws.*)
Pol. (*drawing.*) Thus to the expiatory tomb,
Untimely sepulchre, I do devote thee
In the name of Lalage!

Cas. (*letting fall his sword and recoiling to the extremity of the stage.*)
Of Lalage!
Hold off!—thy sacred hand!—avaunt, I say!
Avaunt—I will not fight thee—indeed I dare not.
Pol. Thou wilt not fight with me didst say, Sir Count?
Shall I be baffled thus?—now this is well;
Didst say thou *darest* not? Ha!
Cas. I dare not—dare not—
Hold off thy hand—with that beloved name
So fresh upon thy lips I will not fight thee—
I cannot—dare not.
Pol. Now, by my halidom,
I do believe thee!—coward, I do believe thee!
Cas. Ha!—coward!—this may not be!
(*clutches his sword and staggers towards Politian, but his purpose is changed before reaching him, and he falls upon his knee at the feet of the Earl.*)
Alas! my lord.
It is—it is—most true. In such a cause
I am the veriest coward. Oh, pity me!
Pol. (*greatly softened*). Alas!—I do—indeed I pity thee.
Cas. And Lalage——
Pol. *Scoundrel!—arise and die!*
Cas. It needeth not be—thus—thus—Oh, let me die
Thus on my bended knee. It were most fitting
That in this deep humiliation I perish.

For in the fight I will not raise a hand
Against thee, Earl of Leicester. Strike thou
home— (*baring his bosom.*)
Here is no let or hindrance to thy weapon—
Strike home. I *will not* fight thee.
Pol. Now 's Death and Hell!
Am I not—am I not sorely—grievously tempted
To take thee at thy word? But mark me, sir:
Think not to fly me thus. Do thou prepare
For public insult in the streets—before
The eyes of the citizens. I'll follow thee—
Like an avenging spirit I'll follow thee
Even unto death. Before those whom thou
lovest—
Before all Rome I'll taunt thee, villain,—I'll
taunt thee,
Dost hear? with *cowardice*—thou *wilt not* fight
me?
Thou liest! thou *shalt!* (*Exit.*)
Cas. Now this indeed is just!
Most righteous, and most just, avenging
Heaven!

NOTE.

29. Such portions of "Politian" as are known to the public first saw the light of publicity in the *Southern Literary Messenger* for December, 1835, and January, 1836, being styled "Scenes from Politian: an unpublished drama." These scenes were included, unaltered, in the 1845 collection of Poems by Poe. The larger portion of the original draft subsequently became the property of the present editor, but it is not considered just to the poet's memory to publish it. The work is a hasty and unrevised production of its author's earlier days of literary labour; and, beyond the scenes already known, scarcely calculated to enhance his reputation. As a specimen, however, of the parts unpublished, the following fragment from the first scene of Act II. may be offered. The Duke, it should be premised, is uncle to Alessandra, and father of Castiglione her betrothed.

Duke. Why do you laugh?
Castiglione. Indeed
I hardly know myself. Stay! Was it not
On yesterday we were speaking of the Earl?
Of the Earl Politian? Yes! it was yesterday.
Alessandra, you and I, you must remember!
We were walking in the garden.
Duke. Perfectly.
I do remember it—what of it—what then?
Cas. O nothing—nothing at all.
Duke. Nothing at all!
It is most singular that you should laugh
At nothing at all!
Cas. Most singular—singular!
Duke. Look you, Castilione, be so kind
As tell me, sir, at once what 'tis you mean.
What are you talking of?
Cas. Was it not so?
We differed in opinion touching him.
Duke. Him!—Whom?
Cas. Why, sir, the Earl Politian.
Duke. The Earl of Leicester! Yes!—is it he you mean?
We differed, indeed. If I now recollect
The words you used were that the Earl you knew
Was neither learned nor mirthful.
Cas. Ha! ha!—now did I?
Duke. That did you, sir, and well I knew at the time
You were wrong, it being not the character
Of the Earl—whom all the world allows to be
A most hilarious man. Be not, my son,
Too positive again.
Cas. 'Tis singular!
Most singular! I could not think it possible
So little time could so much alter one!
To say the truth about an hour ago,

As I was walking with the Count San Ozzo,
All arm in arm, we met this very man
The Earl—he, with his friend Baldazzar,
Having just arrived in Rome. Ha! ha! he *is* altered!
Such an account he gave me of his journey!
'Twould have made you die with laughter—such tales he told
Of his caprices and his merry freaks
Along the road—such oddity—such humour—
Such wit—such whim—such flashes of wild merriment
Set off too in such full relief by the grave
Demeanour of his friend—who, to speak the truth,
Was gravity itself—
Duke. Did I not tell you?
Cas. You did—and yet 'tis strange! but true as strange,
How much I was mistaken! I always thought
The Earl a gloomy man.
Duke. So, so, you see!
Be not too positive. Whom have we here?
It cannot be the Earl?
Cas. The Earl! Oh no!
'Tis not the Earl—but yet it is—and leaning
Upon his friend Baldazzar. Ah! welcome, sir!
(*Enter Politian and Baldazzar.*)
My lord, a second welcome let me give you
To Rome—his Grace the Duke of Broglio.
Father! this is the Earl Politian, Earl
Of Leicester in Great Britain. [*Politian bows haughtily.*]
That, his friend
Baldazzar, Duke of Surrey. The Earl has letters,
So please you, for Your Grace.
Duke. Ha! ha! Most welcome
To Rome and to our palace, Earl Politian!
And you, most noble Duke! I am glad to see you!
I knew your father well, my Lord Politian.
Castiglione! call your cousin hither,
And let me make the noble Earl acquainted
With your betrothed. You come, sir, at a time
Most seasonable. The wedding—
Politian. Touching those letters, sir,
Your son made mention of—your son, is he not?—
Touching those letters, sir, I wot not of them.
If such there be, my friend Baldazzar here—
Baldazzar! ah!—my friend Baldazzar here
Will hand them to Your Grace. I would retire.
Duke. Retire!—So soon?
Cas. What ho! Benito! Rupert!
His lordship's chambers—show his lordship to them!
His lordship is unwell. (*Enter Benito.*)
Ben. This way, my lord! (*Exit, followed by Politian.*)
Duke. Retire! Unwell!
Bal. So please you, sir. I fear me
'Tis as you say—his lordship is unwell.
The damp air of the evening—the fatigue
Of a long journey—the—indeed I had better

Follow his lordship. He must be unwell.
I will return anon.
Duke. Return anon!
Now this is very strange! Castiglione!
This way, my son, I wish to speak with thee.
You surely were mistaken in what you said
Of the Earl, mirthful, indeed!—which of us said
Politian was a melancholy man? (*Exeunt.*)

INTRODUCTION TO POEMS.—1831.

LETTER TO MR. B——.

"WEST POINT, 1831.

"DEAR B—— . . . . . .

Believing only a portion of my former volume to be worthy a second edition—that small portion I thought it as well to include in the present book as to republish by itself. I have therefore herein combined 'Al Aaraaf' and 'Tamerlane' with other poems hitherto unprinted. Nor have I hesitated to insert from the 'Minor Poems,' now omitted, whole lines, and even passages, to the end that being placed in a fairer light, and the trash shaken from them in which they were imbedded, they may have some chance of being seen by posterity.

"It has been said that a good critique on a poem may be written by one who is no poet himself. This, according to *your* idea and *mine* of poetry, I feel to be false—the less poetical the critic, the less just the critique, and the converse. On this account, and because there are but few B——s in the world, I would be as much ashamed of the world's good opinion as

proud of your own. Another than yourself might here observe, 'Shakespeare is in possession of the world's good opinion, and yet Shakespeare is the greatest of poets. It appears then that the world judge correctly, why should you be ashamed of their favourable judgment?' The difficulty lies in the interpretation of the word 'judgment' or 'opinion.' The opinion is the world's, truly, but it may be called theirs as a man would call a book his, having bought it; he did not write the book, but it is his; they did not originate the opinion, but it is theirs. A fool, for example, thinks Shakespeare a great poet—yet the fool has never read Shakespeare. But the fool's neighbour, who is a step higher on the Andes of the mind, whose head (that is to say, his more exalted thought) is too far above the fool to be seen or understood, but whose feet (by which I mean his every-day actions) are sufficiently near to be discerned, and by means of which that superiority is ascertained, which *but* for them would never have been discovered—this neighbour asserts that Shakespeare is a great poet—the fool believes him, and it is henceforward his *opinion.* This neighbour's own opinion has, in like manner, been adopted from one above *him,* and so, ascendingly, to a few gifted individuals who kneel around the summit, beholding, face to face, the master spirit who stands upon the pinnacle.

"You are aware of the great barrier in the path of an American writer. He is read, if at

all, in preference to the combined and established wit of the world. I say established; for it is with literature as with law or empire—an established name is an estate in tenure, or a throne in possession. Besides, one might suppose that books, like their authors, improve by travel—their having crossed the sea is, with us, so great a distinction. Our antiquaries abandon time for distance; our very fops glance from the binding to the bottom of the title-page, where the mystic characters which spell London, Paris, or Genoa, are precisely so many letters of recommendation.

"I mentioned just now a vulgar error as regards criticism. I think the notion that no poet can form a correct estimate of his own writings is another. I remarked before that in proportion to the poetical talent would be the justice of a critique upon poetry. Therefore a bad poet would, I grant, make a false critique, and his self-love would infallibly bias his little judgment in his favour; but a poet, who is indeed a poet, could not, I think, fail of making a just critique; whatever should be deducted on the score of self-love might be replaced on account of his intimate acquaintance with the subject; in short, we have more instances of false criticism than of just where one's own writings are the test, simply because we have more bad poets than good. There are, of course, many objections to what I say: Milton is a great example of the contrary; but his opinion with respect to

the 'Paradise Regained' is by no means fairly ascertained. By what trivial circumstances men are often led to assert what they do not really believe! Perhaps an inadvertent world has descended to posterity. But, in fact, the 'Paradise Regained' is little, if at all, inferior to the 'Paradise Lost,' and is only supposed so to be because men do not like epics, whatever they may say to the contrary, and reading those of Milton in their natural order, are too much wearied with the first to derive any pleasure from the second.

"I dare say Milton preferred 'Comus' to either—if so—justly.

"As I am speaking of poetry, it will not be amiss to touch slightly upon the most singular heresy in its modern history—the heresy of what is called, very foolishly, the Lake School. Some years ago I might have been induced, by an occasion like the present, to attempt a formal refutation of their doctrine; at present it would be a work of supererogation. The wise must bow to the wisdom of such men as Coleridge and Southey, but being wise, have laughed at poetical theories so prosaically exemplified.

"Aristotle, with singular assurance, has declared poetry the most philosophical of all writings*—but it required a Wordsworth to pronounce it the most metaphysical. He seems to think that the end of poetry is, or should be, in-

* Σπουδιοτατον και φιλοσοφικοτατον γενος.

struction; yet it is a truism that the end of our existence is happiness; if so, the end of every separate part of our existence, everything connected with our existence, should be still happiness. Therefore the end of instruction should be happiness; and happiness is another name for pleasure;—therefore the end of instruction should be pleasure: yet we see the above-mentioned opinion implies precisely the reverse.

"To proceed: *ceteris paribus,* he who pleases is of more importance to his fellow-men than he who instructs, since utility is happiness, and pleasure is the end already obtained which instruction is merely the means of obtaining.

"I see no reason, then, why our metaphysical poets should plume themselves so much on the utility of their works, unless indeed they refer to instruction with eternity in view; in which case, sincere respect for their piety would not allow me to express my contempt for their judgment; contempt which it would be difficult to conceal, since their writings are professedly to be understood by the few, and it is the many who stand in need of salvation. In such case I should no doubt be tempted to think of the devil in 'Melmoth,' who labours indefatigably, through three octavo volumes, to accomplish the destruction of one or two souls, while any common devil would have demolished one or two thousand.

"Against the subtleties which would make poetry a study—not a passion—it becomes the

metaphysician to reason—but the poet to protest. Yet Wordsworth and Coleridge are men in years; the one imbued in contemplation from his childhood; the other a giant in intellect and learning. The diffidence, then, with which I venture to dispute their authority would be overwhelming did I not feel, from the bottom of my heart, that learning has little to do with the imagination—intellect with the passions—or age with poetry.

> "'Trifles, like straws, upon the surface flow;
> He who would search for pearls must dive below,'

are lines which have done much mischief. As regards the greater truths, men oftener err by seeking them at the bottom than at the top; Truth lies in the huge abysses where wisdom is sought—not in the palpable palaces where she is found. The ancients were not always right in hiding the goddess in a well; witness the light which Bacon has thrown upon philosophy; witness the principles of our divine faith—that moral mechanism by which the simplicity of a child may overbalance the wisdom of a man.

"We see an instance of Coleridge's liability to err, in his *Biographia Literaria*—professedly his literary life and opinions, but, in fact, a treatise *de omni scibili et quibusdam aliis*. He goes wrong by reason of his very profundity, and of his error we have a natural type in the contemplation of a star. He who regards it directly and intensely sees, it is true, the star, but it is the star without a ray—while he who

surveys it less inquisitively is conscious of all for which the star is useful to us below—its brilliancy and its beauty.

"As to Wordsworth, I have no faith in him. That he had in youth the feelings of a poet I believe—for there are glimpses of extreme delicacy in his writings—(and delicacy is the poet's own kingdom—his *El Dorado*)—but they have the appearance of a better day recollected; and glimpses, at best, are little evidence of present poetic fire; we know that a few straggling flowers spring up daily in the crevices of the glacier.

"He was to blame in wearing away his youth in contemplation with the end of poetizing in his manhood. With the increase of his judgment the light which should make it apparent has faded away. His judgment consequently is too correct. This may not be understood,—but the old Goths of Germany would have understood it, who used to debate matters of importance to their State twice, once when drunk, and once when sober—sober that they might not be deficient in formality—drunk lest they should be destitute of vigour.

"The long wordy discussions by which he tries to reason us into admiration of his poetry, speak very little in his favour: they are full of such assertions as this (I have opened one of his volumes at random)—'Of genius the only proof is the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before;'—

indeed? then it follows that in doing what is *un*worthy to be done, or what *has* been done before, no genius can be evinced; yet the picking of pockets is an unworthy act, pockets have been picked time immemorial, and Barrington, the pickpocket, in point of genius, would have thought hard of a comparison with William Wordsworth, the poet.

"Again, in estimating the merit of certain poems, whether they be Ossian's or Macpherson's can surely be of little consequence, yet, in order to prove their worthlessness, Mr. W. has expended many pages in the controversy. *Tantæne animis?* Can great minds descend to such absurdity? But worse still: that he may bear down every argument in favour of these poems, he triumphantly drags forward a passage, in his abomination with which he expects the reader to sympathise. It is the beginning of the epic poem 'Temora.' 'The blue waves of Ullin roll in light; the green hills are covered with day; trees shake their dusty heads in the breeze.' And this—this gorgeous, yet simple imagery, where all is alive and panting with immortality—this, William Wordsworth, the author of 'Peter Bell,' has *selected* for his contempt. We shall see what better he, in his own person, has to offer. Imprimis:

"'And now she's at the pony's tail,
And now she's at the pony's head,
On that side now, and now on this;
And, almost stifled with her bliss,
A few sad tears does Betty shed. . .

She pats the pony, where or when
She knows not . . . happy Betty Foy!
Oh, Johnny, never mind the doctor!'

"Secondly:

"'The dew was falling fast, the—stars began to blink;
I heard a voice: it said—"Drink, pretty creature, drink!"
And, looking o'er the hedge, be—fore me I espied
A show-white mountain lamb, with a—maiden at its side.
No other sheep was near,—the lamb was all alone,
And by a slender cord was—tether'd to a stone.'

"Now, we have no doubt this is all true: we *will* believe it, indeed we will, Mr. W. Is it sympathy for the sheep you wish to excite? I love a sheep from the bottom of my heart.

"But there are occasions, dear B——, there are occasions when even Wordsworth is reasonable. Even Stamboul, it is said, shall have an end, and the most unlucky blunders must come to a conclusion. Here is an extract from his preface:—

"'Those who have been accustomed to the phraseology of modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to a conclusion (*impossible!*) will, no doubt, have to struggle with feelings of awkwardness; (ha! ha! ha!) they will look round for poetry (ha! ha! ha! ha!), and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts have been permitted to assume that title.' Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

"Yet, let not Mr. W. despair; he has given immortality to a waggon, and the bee Sophocles has transmitted to eternity a sore toe, and dignified a tragedy with a chorus of turkeys.

"Of Coleridge, I cannot speak but with reverence. His towering intellect! his gigantic power! To use an author quoted by himself, '*J'ai trouvé souvent que la plupart des sectes ont raison dans une bonne partie de ce qu'elles avancent, mais non pas en ce qu'elles nient;*' and to employ his own language, he has imprisoned his own conceptions by the barrier he has erected against those of others. It is lamentable to think that such a mind should be buried in metaphysics, and, like the Nyctanthes, waste its perfume upon the night alone. In reading that man's poetry, I tremble like one who stands upon a volcano, conscious from the very darkness bursting from the crater, of the fire and the light that are weltering below.

"What is poetry?—Poetry! that Proteus-like idea, with as many appellations as the nine-titled Corcyra! 'Give me,' I demanded of a scholar some time ago, 'give me a definition of poetry.' '*Très-volontiers;*' and he proceeded to his library, brought me a Dr. Johnson, and overwhelmed me with a definition. Shade of the immortal Shakespeare! I imagine to myself the scowl of your spiritual eye upon the profanity of that scurrilous Ursa Major. Think of poetry, dear B——, think of poetry, and then think of Dr. Samuel Johnson! Think of all that is airy and fairy-like, and then of all that is hideous and unwieldy; think of his huge bulk, the Elephant! and then—and then think

of the 'Tempest'—the 'Midsummer Night's Dream'—Prospero—Oberon—and Titania!

"A poem, in my opinion, is opposed to a work of science by having, for its *immediate* object, pleasure, not truth; to romance, by having, for its object, an *indefinite* instead of a *definite* pleasure, being a poem only so far as this object is attained; romance presenting perceptible images with definite, poetry with *in*definite sensations, to which end music is an *essential,* since the comprehension of sweet sound is our most indefinite conception. Music, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry; music, without the idea, is simply music; the idea, without the music, is prose, from its very definitiveness.

"What was meant by the invective against him who had no music in his soul?

"To sum up this long rigmarole, I have, dear B——, what you, no doubt, perceive, for the metaphysical poets as poets, the most sovereign contempt. That they have followers proves nothing—

"'No Indian prince has to his palace
More followers than a thief to the gallows.'

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.

SONNET—TO SCIENCE.

SCIENCE! true daughter of Old Time thou art!
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

1829

Private reasons—some of which have reference to the sin of plagiarism, and others to the date of Tennyson's first poems * —have induced me, after some hesitation, to republish these, the crude compositions of my earliest boyhood. They are printed *verbatim*—without alteration from the original edition —the date of which is too remote to be judiciously acknowledged.—E.A. P. (1845).

* This refers to the accusation brought against Edgar Poe that he was a copyist of Tennyson.—ED.

AL AARAAF.*

PART I.

O! NOTHING earthly save the ray
(Thrown back from flowers) of Beauty's eye,
As in those gardens where the day
Springs from the germs of Circassy—
O! nothing earthly save the thrill
Of melody in woodland rill—
Or (music of the passion-hearted)
Joy's voice so peacefully departed
That like the murmur in the shell,
Its echo dwelleth and will dwell—
O! nothing of the dross of ours—
Yet all the beauty—all the flowers
That list our Love, and deck our bowers—
Adorn yon world afar, afar—
The wandering star.

'Twas a sweet time for Nesace—for there
Her world lay lolling on the golden air,
Near four bright suns—a temporary rest—
An oasis in desert of the blest.
Away—away—'mid seas of rays that roll
Empyrean splendour o'er th' unchained soul—
The soul that scarce (the billows are so dense)
Can struggle to its destin'd eminence—

* A star was discovered by Tycho Brahe which appeared suddenly in the heavens—attained, in a few days, a brilliancy surpassing that of Jupiter—then as suddenly disappeared, and has never been seen since.

To distant spheres, from time to time, she rode,
And late to ours, the favour'd one of God—
But, now, the ruler of an anchor'd realm,
She throws aside the sceptre—leaves the helm,
And, amid incense and high spiritual hymns,
Laves in quadruple light her angel limbs.

Now happiest, loveliest in yon lovely Earth,
Whence sprang the "Idea of Beauty" into birth,
(Falling in wreaths thro' many a startled star,
Like woman's hair 'mid pearls, until, afar,
It lit on hills Achaian, and there dwelt),
She look'd into Infinity—and knelt.
Rich clouds, for canopies, about her curled—
Fit emblems of the model of her world—
Seen but in beauty—not impeding sight—
Of other beauty glittering thro' the light—
A wreath that twined each starry form around,
And all the opal'd air in colour bound.

All hurriedly she knelt upon a bed
Of flowers: of lilies such as rear'd the head
On the fair Capo Deucato,* and sprang
So eagerly around about to hang
Upon the flying footsteps of——deep pride—
Of her who lov'd a mortal—and so died.†
The Sephalica, budding with young bees,
Uprear'd its purple stem around her knees:
And gemmy flower, of Trebizond misnam'd— ‡

* On Santa Maura—olim Deucadia. † Sappho.
‡ This flower is much noticed by Lewenhoeck and Tournefort. The bee, feeding upon its blossoms, becomes intoxicated.

Inmate of highest stars, where erst it sham'd
All other loveliness: its honied dew
(The fabled nectar that the heathen knew)
Deliriously sweet, was dropp'd from Heaven,
And fell on gardens of the unforgiven
In Trebizond—and on a sunny flower
So like its own above that, to this hour,
It still remaineth, torturing the bee
With madness, and unwonted reverie:
In Heaven, and all its environs, the leaf
And blossom of the fairy plant, in grief
Disconsolate linger—grief that hangs her head,
Repenting follies that full long have fled,
Heaving her white breast to the balmy air,
Like guilty beauty, chasten'd, and more fair:
Nyctanthes too, as sacred as the light
She fears to perfume, perfuming the night:
And Clytia* pondering between many a sun,
While pettish tears adown her petals run:
And that aspiring flower that sprang on
Earth—†
And died, ere scarce exalted into birth,
Bursting its odorous heart in spirit to wing
Its way to Heaven, from garden of a king:

* Clytia—the Chrysanthemum Peruvianum, or, to employ a better-known term, the turnsol—which turns continually towards the sun, covers itself, like Peru, the country from which it comes, with dewy clouds which cool and refresh its flowers during the most violent heat of the day.—*B. de St. Pierre*

† There is cultivated in the king's garden at Paris, a species of serpentine aloe without prickles, whose large and beautiful flower exhales a strong odour of the vanilla, during the time of its expansion, which is very short. It does not blow till towards the month of July—you then perceive it gradually open its petals—expand them—fade and die.—*St. Pierre.*

And Valisnerian lotus thither flown *
From struggling with the waters of the Rhone:
And thy most lovely purple perfume, Zante! †
Isola d'oro!—Fior di Levante!
And the Nelumbo bud that floats for ever.‡
With Indian Cupid down the holy river—
Fair flowers, and fairy! to whose care is given
To bear the Goddess' song, in odours up to Heaven.§

"Spirit! that dwellest where,
In the deep sky,
The terrible and fair,
In beauty vie!
Beyond the line of blue—
The boundary of the star
Which turneth at the view
Of thy barrier and thy bar—
Of the barrier overgone
By the comets who were cast
From their pride, and from their throne
To be drudges till the last—
To be carriers of fire
(The red fire of their heart)
With speed that may not tire

* There is found, in the Rhone, a beautiful lily of the Valisnerian kind. Its stem will stretch to the length of three or four feet—thus preserving its head above water in the swellings of the river.

† The Hyacinth.

‡ It is a fiction of the Indians, that Cupid was first seen floating in one of these down the river Ganges, and that he still loves the cradle of his childhood.

§ And golden vials full of odours which are the prayers of the saints.—*Rev. St. John.*

And with pain that shall not part—
Who livest—*that* we know—
In Eternity—we feel—
But the shadow of whose brow
What spirit shall reveal?
Tho' the beings whom thy Nesace,
Thy messenger hath known
Have dream'd for thy Infinity
A model of their own—*
Thy will is done, O, God!
The star hath ridden high
Thro' many a tempest, but she rode
Beneath thy burning eye;
And here, in thought, to thee—
In thought that can alone
Ascend thy empire and so be

* The Humanitarians held that God was to be understood as having really a human form.—*Vide Clarke's Sermons*, vol. 1, page 26, fol. edit.

The drift of Milton's argument leads him to employ language which would appear, at first sight, to verge upon their doctrine; but it will be seen immediately, that he guards himself against the charge of having adopted one of the most ignorant errors of the dark ages of the Church.—*Dr. Sumner's Notes on Milton's Christian Doctrine.*

This opinion, in spite of many testimonies to the contrary, could never have been very general. Andeus, a Syrian of Mesopotamia, was condemned for the opinion, as heretical. He lived in the beginning of the fourth century. His disciples were called Anthropmorphites.—*Vide du Pin.*

Among Milton's minor poems are these lines:

Dicite sacrorum præsides nemorum Deæ, etc.,
Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine
Natura solers finxit humanum genus?
Eternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo,
Unusque et universus exemplar Dei—And afterwards,
Non cui profundum Cæcitas lumen dedit
Dircæus augur vidit hunc alto sinu. etc.

A partner of thy throne—
By winged Fantasy,*
My embassy is given,
Till secrecy shall knowledge be
In the environs of Heaven."

She ceas'd—and buried then her burning cheek
Abash'd, amid the lilies there, to seek
A shelter from the fervour of His eye;
For the stars trembled at the Deity.
She stirr'd not—breath'd not—for a voice was there
How solemnly pervading the calm air!
A sound of silence on the startled ear
Which dreamy poets name "the music of the sphere."
Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call
"Silence"—which is the merest word of all.
All Nature speaks, and ev'n ideal things
Flap shadowy sounds from visionary wings—
But ah! not so when, thus, in realms on high
The eternal voice of God is passing by,
And the red winds are withering in the sky!

"What tho' in worlds which sightless cycles run,†
Link'd to a little system, and one sun—
Where all my love is folly, and the crowd

* Seltsamen Tochter Jovis
Seinem Schosskinde
Der Phantasie.—*Goethe.*

† Sightless—too small to be seen.—*Legge.*

Still think my terrors but the thunder cloud,
The storm, the earthquake, and the ocean-wrath—
(Ah! will they cross me in my angrier path?)
What tho' in worlds which own a single sun
The sands of Time grow dimmer as they run,
Yet thine is my resplendency, so given
To bear my secrets thro' the upper Heaven.
Leave tenantless thy crystal home, and fly,
With all thy train, athwart the moony sky—
Apart—like fire-flies in Sicilian night,*
And wing to other worlds another light!
Divulge the secrets of thy embassy
To the proud orbs that twinkle—and so be
To ev'ry heart a barrier and a ban
Lest the stars totter in the guilt of man!"

Up rose the maiden in the yellow night,
The single-mooned eve!—on Earth we plight
Our faith to one love—and one moon adore—
The birth-place of young Beauty had no more.
As sprang that yellow star from downy hours,
Up rose the maiden from her shrine of flowers,
And bent o'er sheeny mountain and dim plain
Her way—but left not yet her Therasæan reign.†

* I have often noticed a peculiar movement of the fire-flies;—they will collect in a body and fly off, from a common centre, into innumerable radii.

† Therasæa, or Therasea, the island mentioned by Seneca, which, in a moment, arose from the sea to the eyes of astonished mariners.

PART II.

HIGH on a mountain of enamell'd head—
Such as the drowsy shepherd on his bed
Of giant pasturage lying at his ease,
Raising his heavy eyelid, starts and sees
With many a mutter'd "hope to be forgiven"
What time the moon is quadrated in Heaven—
Of rosy head, that towering far away
Into the sunlit ether, caught the ray
Of sunken suns at eve—at noon of night,
While the moon danc'd with the fair stranger light—
Uprear'd upon such height arose a pile
Of gorgeous columns on th' unburthen'd air,
Flashing from Parian marble that twin smile
Far down upon the wave that sparkled there,
And nursled the young mountain in its lair.
Of molten stars their pavement, such as fall *
Thro' the ebon air, besilvering the pall
Of their own dissolution, while they die—
Adorning then the dwellings of the sky.
A dome, by linked light from Heaven let down,
Sat gently on these columns as a crown—
A window of one circular diamond, there,
Look'd out above into the purple air,
And rays from God shot down that meteor chain
And hallow'd all the beauty twice again,

* Some star which, from the ruin'd roof
Of shak'd Olympus, by mischance did fall.—*Milton.*

Save when, between th' Empyrean and that ring,
Some eager spirit flapp'd his dusky wing.
But on the pillars Seraph eyes have seen
The dimness of this world: that greyish green
That Nature loves the best for Beauty's grave
Lurk'd in each cornice, round each architrave—
And every sculptur'd cherub thereabout
That from his marble dwelling peeréd out,
Seem'd earthly in the shadow of his niche—
Achaian statues in a world so rich?
Friezes from Tadmor and Persepolis—*
From Balbec, and the stilly, clear abyss
Of beautiful Gomorrah! Oh, the wave †
Is now upon thee—but too late to save!

Sound loves to revel in a summer night:
Witness the murmur of the grey twilight
That stole upon the ear, in Eyraco,‡

* Voltaire, in speaking of Persepolis, says. "Je connois bien l'admiration qu' inspirent ces ruines—mais un palais érigé au pied d'une chaine de rochers steriles—peut-il être un chef d'œuvre des arts!"

† "Oh, the wave"—Ula Deguisi is the Turkish appellation: but, on its own shores, it is called Bahar Loth, or Almotanah. There were undoubtedly more than two cities engulfed in the "dead sea." In the valley of Siddim were five—Adrah, Zeboin, Zoar, Sodom and Gomorrah. Stephen of Byzantium mentions eight, and Strabo thirteen (engulphed)—but the last is out of all reason.

It is said [Tacitus, Strabo, Josephus, Daniel of St. Saba, Nau, Maundrell, Trollo D'Arvieux], that after an excessive drought, the vestiges of columns, walls, etc., are seen above the surface. At *any* season, such remains may be discovered by looking down into the transparent lake, and at such distances as would argue the existence of many settlements in the space now usurped by the "Asphaltites."

‡ Eyraco—Chaldea.

Of many a wild star-gazer long ago—
That stealeth ever on the ear of him
Who, musing, gazeth on the distance dim,
And sees the darkness coming as a cloud—
Is not its form—its voice—most palpable and
loud? *

But what is this?—it cometh—and it brings
A music with it—'tis the rush of wings—
A pause—and then a sweeping, falling strain,
And Nesace is in her halls again.
From the wild energy of wanton haste
Her cheeks were flushing, and her lips apart;
The zone that clung around her gentle waist
Had burst beneath the heaving of her heart.
Within the centre of that hall to breathe
She paus'd and panted, Zanthe! all beneath,
The fairy light that kiss'd her golden hair
And long'd to rest, yet could but sparkle there!

Young flowers were whispering in melody *
To happy flowers that night—and tree to tree;
Fountains were gushing music as they fell
In many a star-lit grove, or moon-light dell;
Yet silence came upon material things—
Fair flowers, bright waterfalls and angel
wings—
And sound alone that from the spirit sprang
Bore burthen to the charm the maiden sang:

* I have often thought I could distinctly hear the sound of the darkness as it stole over the horizon.
† Fairies use flowers for their charactery.—*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

"Neath blue-bell or streamer—
Or tufted wild spray
That keeps, from the dreamer,
The moonbeam away—*
Bright beings! that ponder,
With half-closing eyes,
On the stars which your wonder
Hath drawn from the skies,
Till they glance thro' the shade, and
Come down to your brow
Like—eyes of the maiden
Who calls on you now—
Arise! from your dreaming
In violet bowers,
To duty beseeming
These star-litten hours—
And shake from your tresses
Encumber'd with dew
The breath of those kisses
That cumber them too—
(O! how, without you, Love!
Could angels be blest?)
Those kisses of true love
That lull'd ye to rest!
Up! shake from your wing
Each hindering thing:
The dew of the night—
It would weigh down your flight;

* In Scripture is this passage—"The sun shall not harm thee by day, nor the moon by night." It is, perhaps, not generally known that the moon, in Egypt, has the effect of producing blindness to those who sleep with the face exposed to its rays, to which circumstance the passage evidently alludes.

And true love caresses—
O! leave them apart!
They are light on the tresses,
But lead on the heart.

Ligeia! Ligeia!
My beautiful one!
Whose harshest idea
Will to melody run,
O! is it thy will
On the breezes to toss?
Or, capriciously still,
Like the lone Albatross,*
Incumbent on night
(As she on the air)
To keep watch with delight
On the harmony there?

Ligeia! wherever
Thy image may be,
No magic shall sever
Thy music from thee.
Thou hast bound many eyes
In a dreamy sleep—
But the strains still arise
Which *thy* vigilance keep—
The sound of the rain
Which leaps down to the flower,
And dances again
In the rhythm of the shower—

* The Albatross is said to sleep on the wing.

The murmur that springs *
  From the growing of grass
Are the music of things—
  But are modell'd, alas!—
Away, then, my dearest,
  O! hie thee away
To springs that lie clearest
  Beneath the moon-ray—
To lone lake that smiles,
  In its dream of deep rest,
At the many star-isles
  That enjewel its breast—
Where wild flowers, creeping,
  Have mingled their shade,
On its margin is sleeping
  Full many a maid—
Some have left the cool glade, and
  Have slept with the bee—†
Arouse them, my maiden,
  On moorland and lea—
Go! breathe on their slumber

* I met with this idea in an old English tale, which I am now unable to obtain and quote from memory :—"The verie essence and, as it were, springe heade and origine of all musiche is the verie pleasaunte sounde which the trees of the forest do make when they growe."

† The wild bee will not sleep in the shade if there be moonlight.

The rhyme in this verse, as in one about sixty lines before, has an appearance of affectation. It is, however, imitated from Sir W Scott, or rather from Claud Halcro—in whose mouth I admired its effect:

O! were there an island,
  Tho' ever so wild,
Where woman might smile, and
  No man be beguil'd, etc.

All softly in ear,
The musical number
They slumber'd to hear—
For what can awaken
An angel so soon
Whose sleep hath been taken
Beneath the cold moon,
As the spell which no slumber
Of witchery may test,
The rhythmical number
Which lull'd him to rest?"

Spirits in wing, and angels to the view,
A thousand seraphs burst th' Empyrean thro',
Young dreams still hovering on their drowsy flight—
Seraphs in all but "Knowledge," the keen light
That fell, refracted, thro' thy bounds afar,
O Death! from eye of God upon that star:
Sweet was that error—sweeter still that death—
Sweet was that error—ev'n with *us* the breath
Of Science dims the mirror of our joy—
To them 'twere the Simoom, and would destroy—
For what (to them) availeth it to know
That Truth is Falsehood—or that Bliss is Woe?
Sweet was their death—with them to die was rife
With the last ecstasy of satiate life—
Beyond that death no immortality—
But sleep that pondereth and is not "to be"—
And there—oh! may my weary spirit dwell—

Apart from Heaven's Eternity—and yet how
far from Hell! *
What guilty spirit, in what shrubbery dim,
Heard not the stirring summons of that hymn?
But two: they fell: for Heaven no grace imparts
To those who hear not for their beating hearts.
A maiden-angel and her seraph-lover—
O! where (and ye may seek the wide skies over)
Was Love, the blind, near sober Duty known?
Unguided Love hath fallen—'mid "tears of
perfect moan.†

He was a goodly spirit—he who fell:
A wanderer by mossy-mantled well—
A gazer on the lights that shine above—
A dreamer in the moonbeam by his love:
What wonder? for each star is eye-like there,
And looks so sweetly down on Beauty's hair—

* With the Arabians there is a medium between Heaven and Hell, where men suffer no punishment, but yet do not attain that tranquil and even happiness which they suppose to be characteristic of heavenly enjoyment.

Un no rompido sueno—
Un dia puro—allegre—libre
Quiera—
Libre de amor—de zelo—
De odio—de esperanza—de rezelo.—*Luis Ponce de Leon.*

Sorrow is not excluded from "Al Aaraaf," but it is that sorrow which the living love to cherish for the dead, and which, in some minds, resembles the delirium of opium The passionate excitement of Love and the buoyancy of spirit attendant upon intoxication are its less holy pleasures—the price of which, to those souls who make choice of "Al Aaraaf," as their residence after life, is final death and annihilation.

† There be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon.—*Milton.*

And they, and ev'ry mossy spring were holy
To his love-haunted heart and melancholy.
The night had found (to him a night of woe)
Upon a mountain crag, young Angelo—
Beetling it bends athwart the solemn sky,
And scowls on starry worlds that down beneath it lie.
Here sate he with his love—his dark eye bent
With eagle gaze along the firmament:
Now turn'd it upon her—but ever then
It trembled to the orb of EARTH again.

"Ianthe, dearest, see! how dim that ray!
How lovely 'tis to look so far away!
She seemed not thus upon that autumn eve
I left her gorgeous halls—nor mourned to leave.
That eve—that eve—I should remember well—
The sun-ray dropped, in Lemnos with a spell
On th' Arabesque carving of a gilded hall
Wherein I sate, and on the draperied wall—
And on my eye-lids—O, the heavy light!
How drowsily it weighed them into night!
On flowers, before, and mist, and love they ran
With Persian Saadi in his Gulistan:
But O, that light!—I slumbered—Death, the while,
Stole o'er my senses in that lovely isle
So softly that no single silken hair
Awoke that slept—or knew that he was there.

"The last spot of Earth's orb I trod upon
Was a proud temple called the Parthenon; *
More beauty clung around her columned wall
Than even thy glowing bosom beats withal,†
And when old Time my wing did disenthral
Thence sprang I—as the eagle from his tower,
And years I left behind me in an hour.
What time upon her airy bounds I hung,
One half the garden of her globe was flung
Unrolling as a chart unto my view—
Tenantless cities of the desert too!
Ianthe, beauty crowded on me then,
And half I wished to be again of men."

"My Angelo! and why of them to be?
A brighter dwelling-place is here for thee—
And greener fields than in yon world above,
And woman's loveliness — and passionate love."

"But list, Ianthe! when the air so soft
Failed, as my pennoned spirit leapt aloft.‡
Perhaps my brain grew dizzy—but the world
I left so late was into chaos hurled,
Sprang from her station, on the winds apart,
And rolled a flame, the fiery Heaven athwart.
Methought, my sweet one, then I ceased to soar,
And fell—not swiftly as I rose before,

* It was entire in 1687—the most elevated spot in Athens.
† Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
Than have the white breasts of the queen of love.—*Marlowe.*
‡ Pennon, for pinion.—*Milton.*

But with a downward, tremulous motion thro'
Light, brazen rays, this golden star unto!
Nor long the measure of my falling hours,
For nearest of all stars was thine to ours—
Dread star! that came, amid a night of mirth,
A red Dædalion on the timid Earth."

"We came—and to thy Earth—but not to us
Be given our lady's bidding to discuss:
We came, my love; around, above, below,
Gay fire-fly of the night we come and go,
Nor ask a reason save the angel-nod
She grants to us as granted by her God—
But, Angelo, than thine grey Time unfurled
Never his fairy wing o'er fairer world!
Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes
Alone could see the phantom in the skies,
When first Al Aaraaf knew her course to be
Headlong thitherward o'er the starry sea—
But when its glory swelled upon the sky,
As glowing Beauty's burst beneath man's eye,
We paused before the heritage of men,
And thy star trembled—as doth Beauty
then!"

Thus in discourse, the lovers whiled away
The night that waned and waned and brought
no day
They fell: for Heaven to them no hope im-
parts
Who hear not for the beating of their hearts.

1829.

TAMERLANE.

KIND solace in a dying hour!
Such, father, is not (now) my theme—
I will not madly deem that power
Of Earth may shrive me of the sin
Unearthly pride hath revelled in—
I have no time to dote or dream:
You call it hope—that fire of fire!
It is but agony of desire:
If I *can* hope—O God! I can—
Its fount is holier—more divine—
I would not call thee fool, old man,
But such is not a gift of thine.

Know thou the secret of a spirit
Bowed from its wild pride into shame.
O yearning heart! I did inherit
Thy withering portion with the fame,
The searing glory which hath shone
Amid the Jewels of my throne,
Halo of Hell! and with a pain
Not Hell shall make me fear again—
O craving heart, for the lost flowers
And sunshine of my summer hours!
The undying voice of that dead time,
With its interminable chime,

Rings, in the spirit of a spell,
Upon thy emptiness—a knell.

I have not always been as now:
The fevered diadem on my brow
  I claimed and won usurpingly—
Hath not the same fierce heirdom given
  Rome to the Cæsar—this to me?
    The heritage of a kingly mind,
And a proud spirit which hath striven
    Triumphantly with human kind.
On mountain soil I first drew life:
  The mists of the Taglay have shed
  Nightly their dews upon my head,
And, I believe, the winged strife
And tumult of the headlong air
Have nestled in my very hair.

So late from Heaven—that dew—it fell
  ('Mid dreams of an unholy night)
Upon me with the touch of Hell,
  While the red flashing of the light
From clouds that hung, like banners, o'er,
  Appeared to my half-closing eye
  The pageantry of monarchy;
And the deep trumpet-thunder's roar
  Came hurriedly upon me, telling
    Of human battle, where my voice,
  My own voice, silly child!—was swelling
    (O! how my spirit would rejoice,
And leap within me at the cry)
The battle-cry of Victory!

The rain came down upon my head
  Unsheltered—and the heavy wind
  Rendered me mad and deaf and blind.
It was but man, I thought, who shed
  Laurels upon me: and the rush—
The torrent of the chilly air
Gurgled within my ear the crush
  Of empires—with the captive's prayer—
The hum of suitors—and the tone
Of flattery 'round a sovereign's throne.

My passions, from that hapless hour,
  Usurped a tyranny which men
Have deemed since I have reached to power,
    My innate nature—be it so:
  But, father, there lived one who, then,
Then—in my boyhood—when their fire
  Burned with a still intenser glow
(For passion must, with youth, expire)
  E'en *then* who knew this iron heart
  In woman's weakness had a part.

I have no words—alas!—to tell
The loveliness of loving well!
Nor would I now attempt to trace
The more than beauty of a face
Whose lineaments, upon my mind,
Are —— shadows on th' unstable wind:
Thus I remember having dwelt
  Some page of early lore upon,
With loitering eye, till I have felt
The letters—with their meaning—melt
  To fantasies—with none.

O, she was worthy of all love!
Love as in infancy was mine—
'Twas such as angel minds above
Might envy; her young heart the shrine
On which my every hope and thought
Were incense—then a goodly gift,
For they were childish and upright—
Pure—as her young example taught:
Why did I leave it, and, adrift,
Trust to the fire within, for light?

We grew in age—and love—together—
Roaming the forest, and the wild;
My breast her shield in wintry weather—
And, when the friendly sunshine smiled.
And she would mark the opening skies,
I saw no Heaven—but in her eyes.
Young Love's first lesson is —— the heart:
For 'mid that sunshine, and those smiles,
When, from our little cares apart,
And laughing at her girlish wiles,
I'd throw me on her throbbing breast,
And pour my spirit out in tears—
There was no need to speak the rest—
No need to quiet any fears
Of her—who asked no reason why,
But turned on me her quiet eye!

Yet *more* than worthy of the love
My spirit struggled with, and strove,
When, on the mountain peak, alone,
Ambition lent it a new tone—

I had no being—but in thee:
The world, and all it did contain
In the earth—the air—the sea—
Its joy—its little lot of pain
That was new pleasure—the ideal,
Dim, vanities of dreams by night—
And dimmer nothings which were real—
(Shadows—and a more shadowy light!)
Parted upon their misty wings,
And, so, confusedly, became
Thine image and—a name—a name!
Two separate—yet most intimate things.

I was ambitious—have you know
The passion, father? You have not:
A cottager, I marked a throne
Of half the world as all my own,
And murmured at such lowly lot—
But, just like any other dream,
Upon the vapour of the dew
My own had past, did not the beam
Of beauty which did while it thro'
The minute—the hour—the day—oppress
My mind with double loveliness.
We walked together on the crown
Of a high mountain which looked down
Afar from its proud natural towers
Of rock and forest, on the hills—
The dwindled hills! begirt with bowers
And shouting with a thousand rills.

I spoke to her of power and pride,
But mystically—in such guise

That she might deem it nought beside
The moment's converse; in her eyes
I read, perhaps too carelessly—
A mingled feeling with my own—
The flush on her bright cheek, to me
Seemed to become a queenly throne
Too well that I should let it be
Light in the wilderness alone.

I wrapped myself in grandeur then,
And donned a visionary crown—
Yet it was not that Fantasy
Had thrown her mantle over me—
But that, among the rabble—men,
Lion ambition is chained down—
And crouches to a keeper's hand—
Not so in deserts where the grand—
The wild—the terrible conspire
With their own breath to fan his fire.

Look 'round thee now on Samarcand!—
Is she not queen of Earth? her pride
Above all cities? in her hand
Their destinies? in all beside
Of glory which the world hath known
Stands she not nobly and alone?
Falling—her veriest stepping-stone
Shall form the pedestal of a throne—
And who her sovereign? Timour—he
Whom the astonished people saw
Striding o'er empires haughtily
A diademed outlaw!

O, human love! thou spirit given,
On Earth, of all we hope in Heaven!
Which fall'st into the soul like rain
Upon the Siroc-withered plain,
And, failing in thy power to bless,
But leav'st the heart a wilderness!
Idea! which bindest life around
With music of so strange a sound
And beauty of so wild a birth—
Farewell! for I have won the Earth.

When Hope, the eagle that towered, could see
No cliff beyond him in the sky,
His pinions were bent droopingly—
And homeward turned his softened eye.
'Twas sunset: when the sun will part
There comes a sullenness of heart
To him who still would look upon
The glory of the summer sun.
That soul will hate the ev'ning mist
So often lovely, and will list
To the sound of the coming darkness (known
To those whose spirits hearken) as one
Who, in a dream of night, *would* fly,
But *cannot,* from a danger nigh.

What tho' the moon—tho' the white moon
Shed all the splendour of her noon,
Her smile is chilly—and *her* beam,
In that time of dreariness, will seem
(So like you gather in your breath)
A portrait taken after death.

And boyhood is a summer sun
Whose waning is the dreariest one—
For all we live to know is known,
And all we seek to keep hath flown—
Let life, then, as the day-flower, fall
With the noon-day beauty—which is all.
I reached my home—my home no more—
  For all had flown who made it so.
I passed from out its mossy door,
  And, tho' my tread was soft and low,
A voice came from the threshold stone
Of one whom I had earlier known—
  O, I defy thee, Hell, to show
  On beds of fire that burn below,
  An humbler heart—a deeper woe.

Father, I firmly do believe—
  I *know*—for Death who comes for me
    From regions of the blest afar,
Where there is nothing to deceive,
    Hath left his iron gate ajar,
  And rays of truth you cannot see
  Are flashing thro' Eternity——
I do believe that Eblis hath
A snare in every human path—
Else how, when in the holy grove
I wandered of the idol, Love,—
Who daily scents his snowy wings
With incense of burnt-offerings
From the most unpolluted things,
Whose pleasant bowers are yet so riven
Above with trellised rays from Heaven

No mote may shun—no tiniest fly—
The light'ning of his eagle eye—
How was it that Ambition crept,
  Unseen, amid the revels there,
Till growing bold, he laughed and leapt
  In the tangles of Love's very hair?

1829.

TO HELEN.

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
  Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
  The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
  To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
  Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
  To the glory that was Greece,
To the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window niche,
  How statue-like I see thee stand,
  The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
  Are Holy Land!

1831.

THE VALLEY OF UNREST.

Once it smiled a silent dell
Where the people did not dwell;
They had gone unto the wars,
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars
Nightly, from their azure towers,
To keep watch above the flowers,
In the midst of which all day
The red sun-light lazily lay.
Now each visitor shall confess
The sad valley's restlessness.
Nothing there is motionless—
Nothing save the airs that brood
Over the magic solitude.
Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees
That palpitate like the chill seas
Around the misty Hebrides!
Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustle through the unquiet Heaven
Unceasingly, from morn till even,
Over the violets there that lie
In myriad types of the human eye—
Over the lilies there that wave
And weep above a nameless grave!

They wave:—from out their fragrant tops
Eternal dews come down in drops.
They weep:—from off their delicate stems
Perennial tears descend in gems.

1831.

ISRAFEL.*

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
  "Whose heart-strings are a lute;"
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy Stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
  Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
  In her highest noon,
  The enamoured Moon
Blushes with love,
  While, to listen, the red levin
  (With the rapid Pleiads, even,
  Which were seven),
  Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
  And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
  By which he sits and sings—

* And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—*Koran.*

The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angels trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty—
Where Love's a grow-up God—
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live and long!

The ecstacies above
With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervour of thy lute—
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sours;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,

He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.
1836.

TO ——

I HEED not that my earthly lot
Hath—little of Earth in it—
That years of love have been forgot
In the hatred of a minute:—
I mourn not that the desolate
Are happier, sweet, than I,
But that *you* sorrow for *my* fate
Who am a passer-by.

1829.

TO

THE bowers whereat, in dreams, I see
The wantonest singing birds,
Are lips—and all thy melody
Of lip-begotten words—

Thine eyes, in Heaven of heart enshrined
Then desolately fall,
O God! on my funereal mind
Like starlight on a pall—

Thy heart—*thy* heart!—I wake and sigh,
And sleep to dream till day
Of the truth that gold can never buy—
Of the baubles that it may.

1829.

TO THE RIVER

Fair river! in thy bright, clear flow
Of crystal, wandering water,
Thou art an emblem of the glow
Of beauty—the unhidden heart—
The playful maziness of art
In old Alberto's daughter;

But when within thy wave she looks—
Which glistens then, and trembles—
Why, then, the prettiest of brooks
Her worshipper resembles;
For in his heart, as in thy stream,
Her image deeply lies—
His heart which trembles at the beam
Of her soul-searching eyes.

1829.

SONG.

I saw thee on thy bridal day—
  When a burning blush came o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
  The world all love before thee:

And in thine eye a kindling light
  (Whatever it might be)
Was all on Earth my aching sight
    Of Loveliness could see.

That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame—
  As such it well may pass—
Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame
  In the breast of him, alas!

Who saw thee on that bridal day,
  When that deep blush *would* come o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
  The world all love before thee.
1827.

SPIRITS OF THE DEAD.

THY soul shall find itself alone
'Mid dark thoughts of the grey tomb-stone—
Not one, of all the crowd, to pry
Into thine hour of secrecy.
Be silent in that solitude
  Which is not loneliness—for then
The spirits of the dead who stood
  In life before thee are again
In death around thee—and their will
Shall overshadow thee: be still.
The night—tho' clear—shall frown—
And the stars shall not look down
From their high thrones in the Heaven,
With light like Hope to mortals given—
But their red orbs, without beam,
To thy weariness shall seem
As a burning and a fever
Which would cling to thee for ever.
Now are thoughts thou shalt not banish—
Now are visions ne'er to vanish—
From thy spirit shall they pass
No more—like dew-drops from the grass.
The breeze—the breath of God—is still—
And the mist upon the hill

Shadowy—shadowy—yet unbroken,
Is a symbol and a token—
How it hangs upon the trees,
A mystery of mysteries!

1827.

A DREAM.

In visions of the dark night
I have dreamed of joy departed—
But a waking dream of life and light
Hath left me broken-hearted.

Ah! what is not a dream by day
To him whose eyes are cast
On things around him with a ray
Turned back upon the past?

That holy dream—that holy dream,
While all the world were chiding,
Hath cheered me as a lovely beam,
A lonely spirit guiding.

What though that light, thro' storm and night,
So trembled from afar—
What could there be more purely bright
In Truth's day-star?
1827.

ROMANCE.

ROMANCE, who loves to nod and sing,
With drowsy head and folded wing,
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been—a most familiar bird—
Taught me my alphabet to say—
To lisp my very earliest word.
While in the wild wood I did lie,
A child—with a most knowing eye.

Of late, eternal Condor years
So shake the very Heaven on high
With tumult as they thunder by,
I have no time for idle cares
Though gazing on the unquiet sky.
And when an hour with calmer wings
Its down upon my spirit flings—
That little time with lyre and rhyme
To while away—forbidden things!
My heart would feel to be a crime
Unless it trembled with the strings.
1829.

FAIRYLAND.

DIM vales—and shadowy floods—
And cloudy-looking woods,
Whose forms we can't discover
For the tears that drip all over
Huge moons there wax and wane—
Again—again—again—
Every moment of the night—
For ever changing places—
And they put out the star-light
With the breath from their pale faces.
About twelve by the moon-dial
One more filmy than the rest
(A kind which, upon trial,
They have found to be the best)
Comes down—still down—and down
With its centre on the crown
Of a mountain's eminence,
While its wide circumference
In easy drapery falls
Over hamlets, over halls,
Wherever they may be—
O'er the strange woods—o'er the sea—
Over spirits on the wing—
Over every drowsy thing—
And buries them up quite

In a labyrinth of light—
And then, how deep!—O, deep!
Is the passion of their sleep.
In the morning they arise,
And their moony covering
Is soaring in the skies,
With the tempests as they toss,
Like——almost any thing—
Or a yellow Albatross.
They use that moon no more
For the same end as before—
Videlicet a tent—
Which I think extravagant:
Its atomies, however,
Into a shower dissever,
Of which those butterflies,
Of Earth, who seek the skies,
And so come down again
(Never-contented things!)
Have brought a specimen
Upon their quivering wings.

1831.

THE LAKE. TO

In spring of youth it was my lot
To haunt of the wide world a spot
The which I could not love the less—
So lovely was the loneliness
Of a wild lake, with black rock bound,
And the tall pines that towered around.

But when the Night had thrown her pall
Upon that spot, as upon all,
And the mystic wind went by
Murmuring in melody—
Then—ah, then, I would awake
To the terror of the lone lake.

Yet that terror was not fright,
But a tremulous delight—
A feeling not the jewelled mine
Could teach or bribe me to define—
Nor Love—although the Love were thine.

Death was in that poisonous wave,
And in its gulf a fitting grave
For him who thence could solace bring
To his lone imagining—
Whose solitary soul could make
An Eden of that dim lake.

1827.

EVENING STAR.

'Twas noontide of summer,
And midtime of night,
And stars, in their orbits,
Shone pale, through the light
Of the brighter, cold moon.
'Mid planets her slaves,
Herself in the Heavens,
Her beam on the waves.

I gazed awhile
On her cold smile;
Too cold—too cold for me—
There passed, as a shroud,
A fleecy cloud,
And I turned away to thee,
Proud Evening Star,
In thy glory afar
And dearer thy beam shall be;
For joy to my heart
Is the proud part
Thou bearest in Heaven at night,
And more I admire
Thy distant fire,
Than that colder, lowly light.

1827.

IMITATION.

A DARK unfathomed tide
Of interminable pride—
A mystery, and a dream,
Should my early life seem;
I say that dream was fraught
With a wild and waking thought
Of beings that have been,
Which my spirit hath not seen,
Had I let them pass me by,
With a dreaming eye!
Let none of earth inherit
That vision on my spirit;
Those thoughts I would control,
As a spell upon his soul:
For that bright hope at last
And that light time have past,
And my worldly rest hath gone
With a sigh as it passed on:
I care not though it perish
With a thought I then did cherish.

1827.

"THE HAPPIEST DAY."

I.

THE happiest day—the happiest hour
My seared and blighted heart hath known,
The highest hope of pride and power,
I feel hath flown.

II.

Of power! said I? Yes! such I ween
But they have vanished long, alas!
The visions of my youth have been—
But let them pass.

III.

And pride, what have I now with thee?
Another brow may ev'n inherit
The venom thou hast poured on me—
Be still my spirit!

IV.

The happiest day—the happiest hour
Mine eyes shall see—have ever seen
The brightest glance of pride and power
I feel have been:

V.

But were that hope of pride and power
Now offered with the pain
Ev'n *then* I felt—that brightest hour
I would not live again:

VI.

For on its wing was dark alloy
And as it fluttered—fell
An essence—powerful to destroy
A soul that knew it well.
1827.

Translation from the Greek.

HYMN TO ARISTOGEITON AND HARMODIUS.

I.

WREATHED in myrtle, my sword I'll conceal
Like those champions devoted and brave,
When they plunged in the tyrant their steel,
And to Athens deliverance gave.

II.

Beloved heroes! your deathless souls roam
In the joy breathing isles of the blest;
Where the mighty of old have their home—
Where Achilles and Diomed rest.

III.

In fresh myrtle my blade I'll entwine,
Like Harmodius, the gallant and good,
When he made at the tutelar shrine
A libation of Tyranny's blood.

IV.

Ye deliverers of Athens from shame!
Ye avengers of Liberty's wrongs!
Endless ages shall cherish your fame,
Embalmed in their echoing songs!

1827.

DREAMS.

Oh! that my young life were a lasting dream!
My spirit not awakening, till the beam
Of an Eternity should bring the morrow.
Yes! though that long dream were of hopeless sorrow,
'Twere better than the cold reality
Of waking life, to him whose heart must be,
And hath been still, upon the lovely earth,
A chaos of deep passion, from his birth.
But should it be—that dream eternally
Continuing—as dreams have been to me
In my young boyhood—should it thus be given,
'Twere folly still to hope for higher Heaven.
For I have revelled when the sun was bright
I' the summer sky, in dreams of living light
And loveliness,—have left my very heart
Inclines of my imaginary apart*
From mine own home, with beings that have been
Of mine own thought—what more could I have seen?
'Twas once—and only once—and the wild hour
From my remembrance shall not pass—some power

* In climes of mine imagining apart ?—Ed.

Or spell had bound me—'twas the chilly wind
Came o'er me in the night, and left behind
Its image on my spirit—or the moon
Shone on my slumbers in her lofty noon
Too coldly—or the stars—howe'er it was
That dream was as that night-wind—let it pass.
I have been happy, though in a dream.
I have been happy—and I love the theme:
Dreams! in their vivid colouring of life
As in that fleeting, shadowy, misty strife
Of semblance with reality which brings
To the delirious eye, more lovely things
Of Paradise and Love—and all my own!—
Than young Hope in his sunniest hour hath
known.

"IN YOUTH I HAVE KNOWN ONE."

How often we forget all time, when lone
Admiring Nature's universal throne;
Her woods—her wilds—her mountains—the intense
Reply of Hers to Our intelligence!

I.

In youth I have known one with whom the Earth
In secret communing held—as he with it,
In daylight, and in beauty, from his birth:
Whose fervid, flickering torch of life was lit
From the sun and stars, whence he had drawn forth
A passionate light such for his spirit was fit—
And yet that spirit knew—not in the hour
Of its own fervour—what had o'er it power.

II.

Perhaps it may be that my mind is wrought
To a fever* by the moonbeam that hangs o'er,
But I will half believe that wild light fraught
With more of sovereignty than ancient lore
Hath ever told—or is it of a thought
The unembodied essence, and no more
That with a quickening spell doth o'er us pass
As dew of the night-time, o'er the summer grass?

* Query "fervour"?—Ed.

III.

Doth o'er us pass, when, as th' expanding eye
To the loved object—so the tear to the lid
Will start, which lately slept in apathy?
And yet it need not be—(that object) hid
From us in life—but common—which doth lie
Each hour before us—but then only bid
With a strange sound, as of a harp-string broken
T' awake us—'Tis a symbol and a token—

IV.

Of what in other worlds shall be—and given
In beauty by our God, to those alone
Who otherwise would fall from life and Heaven
Drawn by their heart's passion, and that tone,
That high tone of the spirit which hath striven
Though not with Faith—with godliness—whose throne
With desperate energy 't hath beaten down;
Wearing its own deep feeling as a crown.

A PÆAN.

I.

How shall the burial rite be read?
The solemn song be sung?
The requiem for the loveliest dead,
That ever died so young?

II.

Her friends are gazing on her,
And on her gaudy bier,
And weep!—oh! to dishonour
Dead beauty with a tear!

III.

They loved her for her wealth—
And they hated her for her pride—
But she grew in feeble health,
And they *love* her—that she died.

IV.

They tell me (while they speak
Of her "costly broider'd pall")
That my voice is growing weak—
That I should not sing at all—

V.

Or that my tone should be
Tun'd to such solemn song

So mournfully—so mournfully,
That the dead may feel no wrong.

VI.

But she is gone above,
With young Hope at her side,
And I am drunk with love
Of the dead, who is my bride.—

VII.

Of the dead—dead who lies
All perfum'd there,
With the death upon her eyes,
And the life upon her hair.

VIII.

Thus on the coffin loud and long
I strike—the murmur sent
Through the grey chambers to my song.
Shall be the accompaniment.

IX.

Thou diedst in thy life's June—
But thou didst not die too fair:
Thou didst not die too soon,
Nor with too calm an air.

X.

From more than friends on earth,
Thy life and love are riven,
To join the untainted mirth
Of more than thrones in heaven.—

XI.

Therefore, to thee this night
I will no requiem raise,
But waft thee on thy flight,
With a Pæan of old days.

NOTES.

30. On the "Poems written in Youth" little comment is needed. This section includes the pieces printed for first volume of 1827 (which was subsequently suppressed), such poems from the first and second published volumes of 1829 and 1831 as have not already been given in their revised versions, and a few others collected from various sources. "Al Aaraaf" first appeared, with the sonnet "To Silence" prefixed to it, in 1829, and is, substantially, as originally issued. In the edition for 1831, however, this poem, its author's longest, was introduced by the following twenty-nine lines, which have been omitted in all subsequent collections :—

AL AARAAF.

Mysterious star!
Thou wert my dream
All a long summer night—
Be now my theme!
By this clear stream,
Of thee will I write;
Meantime from afar
Bathe me in light!

Thy world has not the dross of ours,
Yet all the beauty—all the flowers
That list our love or deck our bowers
In dreamy gardens, where do lie
Dreamy maidens all the day;
While the silver winds of Circassy
On violet couches faint away.
Little—oh! little dwells in thee
Like unto what on earth we see:
Beauty's eye is here the bluest
In the falsest and untruest—
On the sweetest air doth float
The most sad and solemn note—
If with thee be broken hearts,
Joy so peacefully departs,
That its echo still doth dwell,
Like the murmur in the shell.
Thou! thy truest type of grief
Is the gently falling leaf—
Thou! thy framing is so holy
Sorrow is not melancholy.

31. The earliest version of "Tamerlane" was included in the suppressed volume of 1827, but differs very considerably from the poem as now published. The present draft, besides innumerable verbal alterations and improvements upon the or-

iginal, is more carefully punctuated, and, the lines being indented, presents a more pleasing appearance, to the eye at least.

32. "To Helen" first appeared in the 1831 volume, as did also "The Valley of Unrest" (as "The Valley Nis"), "Israfel," and one or two others of the youthful pieces. The poem styled "Romance" constituted the Preface of the 1829 volume, but with the addition of the following lines:—

Succeeding years, too wild for song,
Then rolled like tropic storms along,
Where, through the garish lights that fly
Dying along the troubled sky,
Lay bare, through vistas thunder riven,
The blackness of the general Heaven,
That very blackness yet doth fling
Light on the lightning's silver wing.

For being an idle boy lang syne,
Who read Anacreon and drank wine,
I early found Anacreon rhymes
Were almost passionate sometimes—
And by strange alchemy of brain
His pleasures always turned to pain—
His naïveté to wild desire—
His wit to love—his wine to fire—
And so, being young and dipt in folly,
I fell in love with melancholy,
And used to throw my earthly rest
And quiet all away in jest—
I could not love except where Death
Was mingling his with Beauty's breath—
Or Hymen, Time, and Destiny,
Were stalking between her and me.
. . . . . .

But *now* my soul hath too much room—
Gone are the glory and the gloom—
The black hath mellow'd into grey,
And all the fires are fading away.

My draught of passion hath been deep—
I revell'd, and I now would sleep—
And after drunkenness of soul
Succeeds the glories of the bowl—
An idle longing night and day
To dream my very life away.

But dreams—of those who dream as I,
Aspiringly, are damned, and die:
Yet should I swear I mean alone,
By notes so very shrilly blown,

To break upon Time's monotone,
While yet my vapid joy and grief
Are tintless of the yellow leaf—
Why not an imp the greybeard hath,
Will shake his shadow in my path—
And e'en the greybeard will o'erlook
Connivingly my dreaming-book.

DOUBTFUL POEMS.

ALONE.

From childhood's hour I have not been
As other's were—I have not seen
As others saw—I could not bring
My passions from a common spring—
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow—I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone—
And all I loved—*I* loved alone—
Thou—in my childhood—in the dawn
Of a most stormy life—was drawn
From every depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still—
From the torrent, or the fountain—
From the red cliff of the mountain—
From the sun that round me roll'd
In its autumn tint of gold—
From the lightning in the sky
As it passed me flying by—
From the thunder and the storm—
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view.

March 17, 1829.

TO ISADORE.

I.

BENEATH the vine-clad eaves,
Whose shadows fall before
Thy lowly cottage door—
Under the lilac's tremulous leaves—
Within thy snowy claspëd hand
The purple flowers it bore.
Last eve in dreams, I saw thee stand,
Like queenly nymphs from Fairy-land-
Enchantress of the flowery wand,
Most beauteous Isadore!

II.

And when I bade the dream
Upon thy spirit flee,
Thy violet eyes to me
Upturned, did overflowing seem
With the deep, untold delight
Of Love's serenity;
Thy classic brow, like lilies white
And pale as the Imperial Night
Upon her throne, with stars bedight,
Enthralled my soul to thee!

III.

Ah! ever I behold
Thy dreamy, passionate eyes,

Blue as the languid skies
Hung with the sunset's fringe of gold;
Now strangely clear thine image grows,
And olden memories
Are startled from their long repose
Like shadows on the silent snows
When suddenly the night-wind blows
Where quiet moonlight lies.

IV.

Like music heard in dreams,
Like strains of harps unknown,
Of birds for ever flown—
Audible as the voice of streams
That murmur in some leafy dell,
I hear thy gentlest tone,
And Silence cometh with her spell
Like that which on my tongue doth dwell,
When tremulous in dreams I tell
My love to thee alone!

V.

In every valley heard,
Floating from tree to tree,
Less beautiful to me,
The music of the radiant bird,
Than artless accents such as thine
Whose echoes never flee!
Ah! how for thy sweet voice I pine:—
For uttered in thy tones benign
(Enchantress!) this rude name of mine
Doth seem a melody!

THE VILLAGE STREET.

In these rapid, restless shadows,
Once I walked at eventide,
When a gentle, silent maiden,
Walked in beauty at my side.
She alone there walked beside me
All in beauty, like a bride.

Pallidly the moon was shining
On the dewy meadows nigh;
On the silvery, silent rivers,
On the mountains far and high,—
On the ocean's star-lit waters,
Where the winds a-weary die.

Slowly, silently we wandered
From the open cottage door,
Underneath the elm's long branches
To the pavement bending o'er;
Underneath the mossy willow
And the dying sycamore.

With the myriad stars in beauty
All bedight, the heavens were seen,
Radiant hopes were bright around me,
Like the light of stars serene;

Like the mellow midnight splendour
Of the Night's irradiate queen.

Audibly the elm-leaves whispered
Peaceful, pleasant melodies,
Like the distant murmured music
Of unquiet, lovely seas;
While the winds were hushed in slumber
In the fragrant flowers and trees.

Wondrous and unwonted beauty
Still adorning all did seem,
While I told my love in fables
'Neath the willows by the stream;
Would the heart have kept unspoken
Love that was its rarest dream!

Instantly away we wandered
In the shadowy twilight tide,
She, the silent, scornful maiden,
Walking calmly at my side,
With a step serene and stately,
All in beauty, all in pride.

Vacantly I walked beside her.
On the earth mine eyes were cast;
Swift and keen there came unto me
Bitter memories of the past—
On me, like the rain in Autumn
On the dead leaves, cold and fast.

Underneath the elms we parted,
By the lowly cottage door;
One brief word alone was uttered—

Never on our lips before;
And away I walked forlornly,
Broken-hearted evermore.

Slowly, silently I loitered,
Homeward, in the night, alone;
Sudden anguish bound my spirit,
That my youth had never known;
Wild unrest, like that which cometh
When the Night's first dream hath flown.

Now, to me the elm-leaves whisper
Mad, discordant melodies,
And keen melodies like shadows
Haunt the moaning willow trees,
And the sycamores with laughter
Mock me in the nightly breeze.

Sad and pale the Autumn moonlight
Through the sighing foliage streams;
And each morning, midnight shadow,
Shadow of my sorrow seems;
Strive, O heart, forget thine idol!
And, O soul, forget thy dreams!

THE FOREST REVERIE.

'Tis said that when
The hands of men
Tamed this primeval wood,
And hoary trees with groans of wo,
Like warriors by an unknown foe,
Were in their strength subdued,
The virgin Earth
Gave instant birth
To springs that ne'er did flow—
That in the sun
Did rivulets run,
And all around rare flowers did blow—
The wild rose pale
Perfumed the gale,
And the queenly lily adown the dale
(Whom the sun and the dew
And the winds did woo),
With the gourd and the grape luxuriant grew.

So when in tears
The love of years
Is wasted like the snow,
And the fine fibrils of its life
By the rude wrong of instant strife
Are broken at a blow—

Within the heart
Do springs upstart
Of which it doth now know,
And strange, sweet dreams,
Like silent streams
That from new fountains overflow,
With the earlier tide
Of rivers glide
Deep in the heart whose hope has died—
Quenching the fires its ashes hide,—
Its ashes, whence will spring and grow
Sweet flowers, ere long,—
The rare and radiant flowers of song!

NOTES.

Of the many verses from time to time ascribed to the pen of Edgar Poe, and not included among his known writings, the lines entitled "Alone" have the chief claim to our notice. *Fac-simile* copies of this piece had been in possession of the present editor some time previous to its publication in *Scribner's Magazine* for September, 1875; but as proofs of the authorship claimed for it were not forthcoming, he refrained from publishing it as requested. The desired proofs have not yet been adduced, and there is, at present, nothing but internal evidence to guide us. "Alone" is stated to have been written by Poe in the album of a Baltimore lady (Mrs. Balderstone ?), on March 17th, 1829, and the *fac-simile* given in *Scribner's* is alleged to be of his handwriting. If the caligraphy be Poe's, it is different in all essential respects from all the many specimens known to us, and strongly resembles that of the writer of the heading and dating of the manuscript, both of which the contributor of the poem acknowledges to have been recently added. The lines, however, if not by Poe, are the most successful imitation of his early mannerisms yet made public, and, in the opinion of one well qualified to speak, "are not unworthy on the whole of the parentage claimed for them."

Whilst Edgar Poe was editor of the *Broadway Journal*, some lines "To Isadore" appeared therein, and, like several of his known pieces, bore no signature. They were at once ascribed to Poe, and in order to satisfy questioners, an editorial paragraph subsequently appeared saying they were by "A Ide, junior." Two previous poems had appeared in the *Broadway Journal* over the signature of "A M. Ide," and whoever wrote them was also the author of the lines "To Isadore." In order, doubtless, to give a show of variety, Poe was then publishing some of his known works in his journal over *noms de plume*, and as no other writings whatever can be traced to any person bearing the name of "A. M. Ide," it is not impossible that the poems now republished in this collection may be by the author of "The Raven" Having been published without his usual elaborate revision, Poe may have wished to *hide* his hasty work under an assumed name. The three pieces are included in the present collection, so the reader can judge for himself what pretensions they possess to be by the author of "The Raven"